

A party-centered approach to explain the vow in the 2014 Scottish Independence Referendum

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1. Introduction

In 1998, Scotland established its own Parliament and Executive, after the 1997 referendum. During this referendum on devolution for Scotland, a majority of Scots voted in favor of a Scottish Parliament with tax varying powers. The new Scottish Parliament proved to be a stage for the Scottish National Party, SNP, who during the 2011 Scottish election campaign, promised that if they were to receive a majority in Scottish Parliament, they would demand a binding independence referendum. As they indeed received an overall majority in Scottish Parliament, Westminster acknowledged the mandate, and decided upon granting Scotland the right to hold an independence referendum. The number of Scots casting their vote in the referendum was astonishingly high with a turnout of around 86%, which was unprecedented in the UK and broke all voting records (*Sky News*, 2014). The referendum resulted in a win for the no voters, 55% of the voters voted 'no' to the question *should Scotland be an independent country?*

The three main UK parties, the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats, have historically disagreed on the issue of Scotland and devolution (Deacon, 2012). During the 1997 referendum on devolution for Scotland, the Conservatives opposed any form of devolution. In 2009, party leader David Cameron admitted his party was wrong opposing devolution during the 1990s (*BBC*, 2009). Labour and the Liberal Democrats have traditionally been more supportive on devolution. Labour campaigned for and implemented the 1997 devolution and decentralization is one of the main aims of the Liberal Democrats (Deacon, 2012; Liberal Democrats, 2010) However, the shift in the Conservatives' standpoint from 1997 does not mean the three main parties agree on further devolution and what this should entail. In fact, there was no agreement among these parties on devolution or the future of Scotland during the referendum campaign (Torrance, 2014; Law, 2015). Furthermore, during process of signing the 2012 Edinburgh Agreement, which paved the way constitutionally for the referendum to be held, Prime Minister David Cameron ensured that voters would be faced with a binary yes/no question to independence. The SNP leader and Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond, wanted to include a possibility of further devolution (Sharp *et al*, 2014). However, despite David Cameron's refusal to include a third option of further devolution, with the promise for more powers from the national party leaders on 16 September 2014, this did occur in the form of altering the meaning of a no vote. A vote against independence would no longer be just that, it would now be a vote supporting further devolution as well.

On 16 September 2014, the front page of the Scottish newspaper the Daily Record published the vow. It was described as an "historic joint promise offering the low risk option to independence" (Law, 2015, p.4). More specifically, the vow was an agreement signed by the three main UK party leaders, David Cameron (Conservatives), Ed Miliband (Labour) and Nick Clegg (Liberal Democrats). It gave three guarantees to the people of Scotland for more powers in the case of a no vote. The first

guarantee stated that Scottish Parliament would receive new extensive powers in 2015, including becoming a permanent and irreversible part of the British Constitution. The second guarantee was about fairness in the allocation of financial resources between the UK's four countries. Finally, the third guarantee stated that Scotland would be able to decide on spending of social policies, such as deciding to spend more on the National Health Service, which had become a main issue during the late stage of the referendum campaign (Clegg, 2014). So, despite the main parties' difference of opinion on how further devolution should look like, and the Westminster government's refusal to add the option of further devolution, the party leaders still decided to come to and sign a joint agreement two days before the referendum. In the agreement they promised further devolution, even though their power bases in Scotland are declining.

The polls predicted a victory for those opposing independence in the months before the referendum. However, as the referendum came closer, the difference between the yes and no voters became narrower. But the yes voters were not taking the lead across all polls. A majority of yes voters was measured in two polls. However, according to What Scotland Thinks (2015a) a total 28 polls were conducted from August 1 until September 17 2014. Still, several scholars, journalists and politicians have stated that the vow was a reaction to the polls from the national party leaders, and was a strategic measure to ensure a no vote in the referendum (Law, 2015; Torrance, 2014).

This thesis aims to explain party behavior, specifically the decision of these parties to ensure further devolution for Scotland. In this case it was clearly parties, rather than a government, who came to the decision of further devolution. Furthermore, as the vow is a decision for further devolution, it is expected that various levels of government influenced the decision. Therefore, this thesis opts for a party-centered approach with insights from the body of theory on parties' roles in decentralization, as well as theory on intergovernmental relations.

To explain this case of party behavior, the following question is asked: *how can we explain why the leaders of the national parties decided to make a combined promise for further devolutions to Scotland two days before the 2014 Independence Referendum?*

In addition to the main research question, several sub-questions are posed, which are meant to provide additional insight into the case.

1. How did the yes and no campaigns operate and specifically, how did the no campaign operate consisting of different parties?
2. What were the main issues during the campaign, and in what way does the vow address these issues?
3. Who initiated the vow and in how was it designed?
4. Did the polls influence party leaders' behavior and in what way?
5. Did the Scottish unionist parties put pressure on the national parties in any way?

In order to answer these questions, additional context on the case is provided in section 4.1.

As any campaign consists of various conditions which are all potentially influential to a proposal such as the vow, this thesis employs a broad theoretical framework in order to answer these questions. Campaigns are complicated events in general, and once the result could be the break-up of a state, it is likely to become even more complicated. The combination of the theoretical approaches takes into account as many conditions as possible, and takes a party-centered approach, as argued by Hopkin (2009), who looks at the role parties play in triggering institutional change, considering parties to be the central actors. Hopkin's (ibid.) approach is however not a fully developed theoretical approach, as it does not provide testable hypotheses and does not move beyond general expectations based around the theoretical argument that parties' behavior matters.

Therefore, the theoretical framework is expanded by taking into account other theoretical approaches as well. First, to include the view stating the vow was a reaction to the polls (Law, 2015; Torrance, 2014), a theoretical approach by Mazzoleni (2009) is employed which argues that parties decide to pay attention to devolution and devolve powers only if it is in their competitive and political advantage. From a competitive advantage lens, the national parties should oppose further devolution, as their powers bases in Scotland are declining, and the Scottish National party is profiting from this. Besides this, it is expected that an explanation could lie with the behavior of Scottish Government during the campaign. It is expected that during the campaign, Scottish Government played a new role, where they now present themselves as fully autonomous anticipating independence. Therefore, a theory by Swenden and McEwen (2014) on intergovernmental relations is employed as well.

From these two main approaches, several other approaches are employed elaborating on several aspects of these main approaches. By adding these, the theoretical framework moves beyond purely strategic and intergovernmental relations explanations, and adds nuance by looking at factors as general determinants for decentralization, issues, inter-party relations and ideology. First, the theoretical approach takes into account more general determinants of decentralization, stable and powerful government and the presence of regionalist parties, which have been designed and tested quantitatively by Spina (2013). Second, the element of party ideology is included in the approach by Toubeau and Wagner (2013) to see whether support for devolution from these parties comes naturally, or is the result of within-party trade-offs. Third, expanding on Swenden and McEwen's (2014) intergovernmental relations, Libbrecht, Maddens and Swenden's (2011) approach on relations between national parties and their regional counterparts, is employed to look at inter-party relations between the national and Scottish branches. Finally, Convery's (2013) approach in high and low politics is employed, to see whether the vow can be seen as a purely strategic document, or going beyond strategy in their promises. Furthermore, whether issues are considered high or low politics,

could influence parties' behavior. By applying each of these theoretical approaches for the case of the independence referendum and the vow, it provides insight to what elements hold explanatory power for the vow. It is acknowledged here that newspapers have influenced people's ideas and campaigns in the UK (Brandenburg and van Egmond, 2012), and could therefore have influenced this campaign as well. Media outlets such as newspaper articles are also discussed in the reconstruction and analysis.

This thesis takes the form of a case study, and qualitative methods are therefore employed. Many of the theoretical approaches that are employed in this thesis have been tested quantitatively. However, I argue that in order to answer the research question, qualitative research is necessary, because this allows us to take into account the context and dynamics of the case. Although the theoretical approaches provide expectations regarding the case, testing these quantitatively would not allow answering the research question, as this would remain too shallow. This thesis uses different theoretical insights which do not all match the same method of research. Therefore, this thesis employs both process tracing and content analysis. Process tracing based on newspaper articles and official documents of national and Scottish Parliaments and governments is employed in order to create a reconstruction of main events leading up to and during the referendum campaign, which could have made it possible for the vow to occur. Polls are used to illustrate certain developments during the campaign. Furthermore, content analysis on data consisting of party programs, the vow and other proposals for more powers, hits on newspaper articles on the referendum and more specific issues is employed to see which of these elements may have influenced the vow and in what way. By using these methods, the hypotheses formulated in the theoretical chapter are either confirmed or rejected.

The next chapter discusses the theoretical framework and concludes with the hypotheses that have been derived from each theoretical approach. Then, the methods of process tracing and content analysis are addressed in the methods chapter, which also provides the central concepts, the operationalization of the hypotheses and the data and data-selection. In the empirical section a historical background of the referendum and a reconstruction of the main events during the referendum campaign are provided. The analysis discusses the hypotheses. The conclusion that is presented shows that the vow was in fact in the competitive advantage of the three national parties, who were pressured by a combination of the behavior of the Scottish Government during the campaign, difficulties within the no campaign and the poll results of the last weeks before the referendum.

2. Introducing the Theoretical Framework

In order to answer the question of why the three main UK parties decided to sign the vow right before the referendum, it is important to understand how and why parties act in devolution processes, what their stances are on devolution, how they come to these and why, and the role of and relations with the devolved institutions. Furthermore, it is important to understand which conditions are likely to lead to devolution according to existing theoretical approaches.

The theoretical approaches that make up the theoretical framework were selected for various reasons. It starts from a party-centered approach, developed by Hopkin (2009), which argues that when looking at institutional change, it is important to see parties as the central actor. This central notion is taken as a base, and all but Convery's (2013) theoretical approach fit within this party-centered perspective. As argued above however, Hopkin (2009) does not provide testable hypotheses, and is therefore not enough to answer the research question. Thus, other theoretical approaches that fit within the party-centered approach, considering parties to be central actors, are included, which provide testable hypotheses.

Mazzoleni's (2009) theoretical approach is one of the two main approaches of this theoretical framework. It states that political parties support devolution out of competitive advantage and political logic. Furthermore, a theoretical approach developed by Swenden and McEwen (2014) is included, which deals with the shadow of hierarchy between different levels of government, and intergovernmental relations. These two approaches, which deal with competitive advantage and inter-governmental relations, form the backbone of the theoretical framework.

Other theoretical approaches that are discussed build on these two main approaches, with Spina (2013) looking at general determinants for decentralization which are based on government power and the presence of regional parties and Toubreau and Wagner's (2013) approach focusing on ideology and the support for decentralization, both expand on Mazzoleni (2009). Libbrecht *et al* (2011) focus on inter-party relations expand on Swenden and McEwen (2014). The theoretical framework concludes with Convery's (2013) approach on high and low politics, which does not fit in the party-centered approach. This approach revolves around issues rather than parties, but is included because I expect that the notions of high and low politics are particularly important in a state with devolved government.

This chapter aims to combine these different theoretical insights, in order to provide an explanation for party behavior without losing sight of the broader context and usual suspects that lead to devolution. In section 2.5, it presents an overview of the complete framework. Section 2.6 formulates the case-specific theoretical expectations, from which the hypotheses are formulated.

2.1 Hopkin's party-centered approach

Hopkin (2009) is an advocate of taking a party-centered approach in qualitative research when looking at political decentralization and political parties. He criticizes both cleavage-centered approaches and formal institutional structure approaches. The cleavage-centered approach argues that society and party systems are based on cleavages in society, such as territorial locations, ethnicity or regional identity (Carmani, 2004). This approach is in line with the cleavage approach developed by Lipset and Rokkan (1967), which argues for the stability of party systems and frozen patterns of party competition. However, the cleavage based approach fails to explain recent developments in party systems. These have changed across Europe and the rise of regionalist parties (Hopkin, 2009). According to Chhibber and Kolman (in Hopkin, 2009), the approach that rivaled the cleavage-centered approach is the formal institutional structures approach. This approach revolves around electoral systems and their party system effects. It emphasizes the reductive effect of majoritarian electoral systems on the number of parties in a party system. In this approach, decentralization is added as another institutional variable affecting the party system, specifically by party fragmentation or aggregation. If key issues are addressed at nation-state level, this is likely to lead to party aggregation. Where key policy issues are addressed at the regional level, party fragmentation is more likely (ibid.). Hopkin (ibid.) argues both approaches do not come up with proper explanations for current developments in party systems, do not consider party competition and neglect the role of parties as organizations. Instead, he argues, political parties are a key variable between the state and its formal institutions and society with its patterns of social differentiation. However, what his party-centered approach would entail does not become fully clear from Hopkin's (ibid.) article. This thesis aims to create such a party-centered approach, by adding several other theoretical approaches, which fit within Hopkin's (ibid.) party-centered approach, but also provide testable hypotheses.

Aspects of parties that are considered important to take into account by Hopkin (ibid.), are a parties' ability to detect demands for decentralization, their ability to initiate institutional reforms and their ability to adapt to changing institutional structures (ibid.). Therefore, it is important to look at the role parties play in triggering institutional change, and how parties then change the way in which their party is organized and structured in order to adapt to these changes. Their role in triggering institutional change is specifically important, because Hopkin (ibid.) acknowledges here that parties do not only react to institutional changes, they can decide upon these themselves. Parties may decide to decentralize to resolve internal differences and hold together a heterogeneous electoral base (ibid.). Hopkin (ibid.) claims that when necessary, parties change their organizational structure in a response to institutional reforms they may have started themselves. However, these

changes do depend on established procedures and a party's structure and traditions. Still, in research, there has to be a focus on the autonomous role of parties in institutional change (ibid.).

The party centered approach is the central perspective in the theoretical framework. However, its insights are not sufficient to provide an explanation for this thesis' main question, especially because it does not provide any testable hypotheses. Hopkin (2009) does not move beyond the argument that parties are central actors. Therefore, other theoretical insights are presented next, which fit in this party centered approach, forming this thesis' theoretical body.

2.2 Mazzoleni's competitive and institutional logic

This section explores preliminary analysis by Mazzoleni (2009) suggesting that most parties in Britain, France and Italy, have had different views on decentralization. This variation suggests that institutional reforms are connected to the competitive logics of party politics in advanced democracies (ibid.). This approach fits within Hopkin's (2009) party-centered approach, because it looks at the stances of political parties on the issue of decentralization or devolution, also considering political parties to be the central actors.

Mazzoleni's (2009) results indicate that parties in Britain, France and Italy that are not naturally in favor of decentralization, tend to ignore it in their party programs, until the issue becomes salient (ibid.). In fact, Mazzoleni (ibid.) states that "the changes in the emphasis parties give to decentralization in their programmes appear to be related to developments in the institutional and electoral context" (ibid., p.212). He goes on to argue that external shocks lead to parties changing their position, these shocks for instance relate to their electoral performance. This however, does not mean that once a party loses an election, they change their position on decentralization (ibid.). These external shocks do however, have a strong impact on whether these parties focus on decentralization or not.

Mazzoleni (ibid.) considers the rise of regionalist parties or organizations as a catalyst for central parties changing their position, as does Spina (2013) who is discussed in the next section. Mazzoleni (2009) states that once regionalist parties gain significant electoral support, other parties will focus on emphasizing their support for decentralization and adapt their position on decentralization if necessary. This is in line with parties' strategic behavior literature (ibid.).

Furthermore, Mazzoleni (ibid.) takes into account the differences between 'core' and 'periphery' parties. He theorizes they react differently. Core parties are those regularly in government office, periphery parties are those that are not (ibid.). Core parties are expected to respond in a strategic manner to pressures, indicating they would emphasize support for devolution once it becomes salient and adapt their stance if necessary, whereas parties located in the periphery (away from government office), have a more stable level of attention for decentralization and

devolution and link their stances to their ideology (ibid.). Mazzoleni's (ibid.) analysis of Britain defines the Liberal Democrats as a periphery party, because at that time, they had been absent from government office for a long time. In 2014 however, the Liberal Democrats were part of the Coalition, making them a core party. Hence, the case of the vow only revolves around core parties. Therefore, the distinction between the level of attention for devolution among core and periphery parties is not made for the case of the 2014 independence referendum and the vow. It is clear however, that party dynamics are an important aspect to take into account when looking at devolution.

These findings suggest that it is not so much ideology, but competitive logic and institutional status quo that determines a parties' support for decentralization (ibid.). So, what determines a party's support for decentralization is whether this fits their political and electoral gains, would benefit or damage their political and electoral position and is dependent on the institutional status quo. Hence parties' decisions to support decentralization do not come from ideological considerations, but from considerations on political competition and electoral gains. This insight will be taken into account as well when looking at the case of the 2014 referendum.

2.2.1 Spina's Composition of Government determinants

Spina (2013) quantitatively tested general determinants he theorized lead to decentralization in 29 OECD countries. His theoretical approach provides additional context to Mazzoleni (2009), placing the decision to devolve in a broader view, not only focusing on party behavior, but on general determinants linked to parties for decentralization as well. Spina (2013) identifies two strands of determinants for decentralization from the existing literature. The first contains structural pressures, for example a part of the population that is constantly pressing or protesting for more powers or economic crises. The assumption of this first strand of determinants is that, any government will enact decentralization once they are faced with certain pressures (ibid.). However, looking at reality, governments confronted with these issues often do not support decentralization (Meguid, 2009). Spina's (2013) critique of these determinants is that they fail to grasp the nuance and details that are part of most decentralization processes. However, this does not necessarily mean that these determinants cannot partly explain decentralization, even if they are not able to do so by themselves. It is possible that these determinants of the first strand work together with determinants of the second strand.

This second strand consists of determinants that revolve around partisan strategies. The argument is that decentralization is used by political parties in order to improve their prospects in future elections. This is the line of reasoning held by O'Neill (2003), who argues that parties will enact decentralization, when they expect their national support to weaken, but do have strong regional

power bases. Spina (2013) argues that on the one hand, partisan strategies provide credible explanations that are rooted in electoral incentives in institutional change literature. On the other hand, he claims that these explanations are also not able to fully account for decentralization rationales in all cases. For example, O'Neill's (2003) line of reasoning would not be applicable to Labour deciding to devolve powers to Scotland in 1997, as they were aware of the electoral threats posed by the SNP. Furthermore, it is often the case that governments enacting decentralization, consist of multiple political parties, hence consist of multiple partisan strategies (Spina, 2013). This indicates that the line of reasoning coming from the second strand is too simplistic and can, as well as the first strand, not fully account for governments enacting decentralization.

Therefore, Spina (2013) chooses to focus on a third strand of possible explanations, focusing on the composition of governments. He hypothesizes that ideology, policy platforms, government power and stability and the rise of regionalist parties influence decentralization. The first two factors are not significant in his model of 29 OECD Parliamentary Democracies. Government power and stability and the rise of regionalist parties are statistically significant in his model. Government power revolves around the percentage of the parties' legislative seats in government, which can influence the policy agenda. Government stability revolves around the number of threats from alternative majority governments that can be formed by different parties in the legislature (*ibid.*). The reasoning is that "when seat allocations are closely divided among ruling and opposition parties, governments are less stable owing to policy gridlock and intense scrutiny from viable governing alternatives" (*ibid.*, p.436). He then hypothesizes that the stronger and the more stable governments are the more likely they are to initiate decentralization. Because decentralization can be considered a major institutional reform, it is more likely that this will be passed under the condition of a strong and stable government (*ibid.*).

The other significant determinant in Spina's (*ibid.*) model is the rise of regionalist parties. First, as regionalist parties have a strong regional base and often regional based interests, they are usually less willing to compromise. Because of this, they are potentially more dangerous to the intergovernmental status quo (*ibid.*). Therefore, ruling parties are obliged to embrace the demands of regionalist parties, unless they want to risk losing their electoral support in the region. Heller (2002) argues that regionalist parties trade policy for regional authority. The parties are willing to help government create policies, but in return they require policy making authority on the regional level. Therefore, Spina (2013) expects that higher percentages of regionalist parties in the national legislature increase the likelihood of governments enacting decentralization. These were the statistically significant determinants of decentralization in Spina's (*ibid.*) model. However, it could be argued that ideology, despite its lack of statistical significance in Spina's (*ibid.*) model, could still have

played a role in the case of the Scottish Referendum, because Scotland is ideologically different from the rest of the UK.

Ideology is defined by Spina (ibid.) as "a coherent set of beliefs about any number of political economic and social issues ... often include a stance of the proper distribution and role of intergovernmental power " (p.433). Two different ways in which party ideology can play a role are considered. First, ideology itself could be a motive to support decentralization. Spina (ibid.) expected that governments consisting of right-wing parties increase the likelihood of decentralization occurring. Second, ideology could also be a constraint to the ability of coalitions to reach agreement on decentralization policies. It was expected that governments containing ideologically different parties, would decrease the likelihood of decentralization occurring (ibid.). Ideology is added to this thesis' theoretical framework because between 2010 and 2015, for the first time since many years the UK had a coalition of the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. Meanwhile, in Scottish Parliament the Scottish National Party now holds a majority of the seats and the SNP is ideologically different from the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. Therefore, ideology may have played a role. Also, despite the fact that Spina (ibid.) did not find any significant effect of ideology on political decentralization, the opposite is the case for Toubeau and Wagner (2013) whose approach is discussed in the next section.

2.2.2 Toubeau and Wagner's take on Party Positions on Decentralization

As mentioned above, Toubeau and Wagner (2013) specifically focus on ideology. Their approach acknowledges that decentralization touches upon two party dimensions that are likely to conflict. The economic and the cultural dimension. They also add contextual factors to their model. They develop a theoretical model that largely revolves around these two dimensions and test it in a quantitative way with a sample of 31 countries. For this theoretical framework, the idea of Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) about a tradeoff between the economic and cultural dimension is taken into account. They build on the post-functionalist theory of integration which raises questions of redistribution and efficiency on the one hand, and identity on the other. The post-functionalist theory of integration aims to go beyond the notion that "the allocation of authority is an efficiency-oriented outcome driven by functional pressures and posits instead that it is a deeply political choice conditioned by domestic (non-economic) conflicts" (ibid., p.99). Furthermore, it is established that governance has two purposes that clearly differ: supply public goods but also express identity within the territory (ibid.). They link these questions of efficiency, redistribution and identity to the notion that ideological competition links the issue of decentralization and parties' standpoints.

Decentralization is defined as a multidimensional and a multifaceted process that can address both

issues of efficiency and redistribution (the economic dimension) and of identity and cultural preferences (the cultural dimension) (ibid.).

So, the economic dimension includes efficiency and redistribution issues. Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) argue that parties on the economic right, will generally support decentralization because it is considered a more efficient form of government, efficiency in policy making is seen as necessary for economic prosperity. Also, in a decentralized state, public goods are better able to reflect certain local preferences (ibid.). However, as decentralization takes away power from central governments, this means central governments have less ability to influence the redistribution between citizens. Therefore, it could become difficult for parties in central government to implement some major redistributive policy goals that are generally part of the economic left. These logics of efficiency and redistribution are why Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) expect parties on the economic right to be in support of decentralization. At the same time, this logic of redistribution would be the main reason for parties on the economic left to be less in favor of decentralization.

As mentioned above, the cultural dimension revolves around identity and cultural preferences. "The main cultural question related to decentralization is: how does it reflect the distribution of territorial identities and political communities across a country?" (ibid., p.101). A distinction is made between culturally liberal and culturally conservative parties. Culturally liberal parties are likely to be in support of decentralization. First, because decentralization gives the opportunity to a country's institutions to align with the specific interests and identities of a certain region or community. This is something culturally liberal parties would be in favor of, considering they strive to foster multiculturalism and defend political minorities (ibid.). Second, culturally liberal parties often hold post-materialist values. Decentralization can be seen as a possibility to improve the quality of democracy. "By enhancing civic participation, fostering political deliberation and augmenting the accountability of decision makers"(ibid., p.101). On the other hand, culturally conservative parties are likely to oppose to decentralization. Cultural conservative parties are committed to maintaining the political, cultural and social order. Hence, these parties would not be in favor of decentralization, since local or regional governments could potentially change the national status quo (ibid.).

So, political parties have economic and cultural ideological dimensions based on which they decide their stances on issues. Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) hypothesize that parties on the economic right are likely to be in favor of decentralization, whereas parties on the economic left are likely to oppose decentralization. Parties that are culturally liberal are likely to be in favor of decentralization, whereas parties that are culturally conservative are likely to oppose decentralization. Looking at the European party landscape today however, it is not that often that we see parties on the economic right with culturally liberal standpoints, or parties on the economic left with culturally conservative

standpoints (ibid.). More often, right-wing economic views are combined with culturally conservative views and the vice versa. Therefore, for most European parties the decision to either support or oppose decentralization, implies a tension between the cultural and economic dimension and which is why a tradeoff must be made. This tradeoff is not necessarily always the same and can change across (short periods of) time. Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) add contextual factors in order to be able to compare across countries. The contextual factors are therefore not included in this theoretical framework, since it is designed for a single case study.

2.3 Swenden and McEwen's Intergovernmental relations and party politics

The second strand of this theoretical framework, is based within intergovernmental relations.

Swenden and McEwen (2014) start from the fact that post 1997 devolution, the UK central government still has the final say in any intergovernmental dispute. Specifically, Swenden and McEwen (ibid.) focus on the shadow of hierarchy, which is present in any decentralized or devolved state where the central government (still) holds sovereignty. The shadow of hierarchy refers to the fact that in many countries with regional governments, the national government still holds sovereignty, hence is still able to take devolved powers back, make more matters into reserved matters and the central government often determines the budgets of regional government. In general, central governments stay away from regionalized issues. However, this is not always the case (ibid.).

This article is an example of a qualitative study with a clear focus on the UK case, looking at the intergovernmental relations within the UK and the central government's position, without a complete theoretical framework by which they look at their case. They do pose relevant theoretical expectations. This is their notion that they expect that the shadow of hierarchy will be most clear when the central government and the devolved governments are run by different political parties (ibid.). This situation is defined by Swenden and McEwen (ibid.) as party political incongruence, it is likely that differences of opinion between devolved governments and the central government are articulated more clearly, because the differences in standpoints and opinion cannot be resolved within the same party organizational structure (ibid.).

The reason this theoretical notion is expected to hold some explanatory power on the vow, is that the independence referendum is perhaps the clearest example of party political incongruence in the UK yet, and the shadow of hierarchy has influenced the conditions under which the referendum took place. Therefore, in looking at the SWPs behavior, it is important to take into account as well, whether they are part of central government and whether they can use or have used their hierarchical powers. Libbrecht *et al* (2011) consider relations between national and regional parties,

which is why it is part of the same strand as Swenden and McEwen (2014), who take a similar approach with the shadow of hierarchy.

2.3.1 Libbrecht, Maddens and Swenden's Statewide Parties on Regionalist Issues

Libbrecht, Maddens and Swenden (2011) looked at the strategies of statewide parties in regional elections. They test the Position-Salience-Ownership (PSO) theory against regional elections in Spain and the United Kingdom. The main assumption of the PSO theory is that in order to maximize the number of voters during electoral campaigns, parties have to make choices about both which issues to address and what position to take on the issues they have chosen. Thus, they make decisions about salience and their positions (Libbrecht *et al*, 2011). The next step is to explain party strategies on periphery or regional issues. They consider how statewide parties (SWPs) strategize on these issues both in national and regional elections. The threat of regionalist parties is also considered. As regionalist parties are more successful, this will lead to SWPs having to take more regional issues into account. Libbrecht *et al* adapted the PSO theory to a multi-level electoral setting, in order to allow the PSO theory to account for SWPs strategies regarding regionalist issues (*ibid.*).

The rationale between SWP and their regional counterparts is that an SWP that holds a salient and pro-centralist standpoint in state-wide elections, but holds a salient and pro-regionalist standpoint in regional elections would be undermining its credibility. Therefore, Libbrecht *et al* (*ibid.*) expect that in such a case, the SWP will opt for a salient, however highly ambiguous strategy in the region instead. This, so they do not have a strategy at the regional level, that runs counter the strategy at state-wide elections. However, it is still a possibility that SWPs speak strongly on regionalist issues in regionalist elections (*ibid.*). In the context of regional elections, which addresses much smaller groups and usually revolves around different issues than do state-wide elections, SWPs could opt for giving a lot of attention to the regionalist issues in regionalist elections. "SWPs could be expected to adopt their comparatively most pro-regionalist profile in regional elections due to the more 'regionalist atmosphere' in which regional elections take place" (*ibid.*, p.628).

This theoretical insight about SWPs and their standpoints in state-wide elections and regional elections, is included in this theoretical framework because the referendum falls into neither category. It cannot be considered the same as a regional election, since in this case the outcome impacts the entire nation. However, it cannot be considered a state-wide election either, because it only Scots could vote. So, the referendum could be considered as a hybrid form, existing somewhere between regional and state-wide. Therefore, it is a good theoretical insight to take along when looking at the referendum, considering how the SWPs have acted during the referendum, which is this thesis' main topic of interest.

2.4 Convery's High and Low Politics

The final approach discussed in this chapter is by Convery (2013) who uses the concepts of high and low politics and the four models of centre-periphery relations by Bulpitt in the context of post-devolution Britain. These four models are the *coercive power model*, which is about the center achieving its goals by coercion if necessary. The *centre authority model*, in which the periphery accepts the legitimate right of the center to command and make demands of the periphery. The *capital city bargaining model*, which allows the periphery to use the institutions of the center to push their own goals. Finally, the *central autonomy model* argues the center looks for the space to avoid the periphery and focus on matters of high politics (ibid.). In order to assess the behavior of the SWPs, specifically of the Conservatives, it is important to assess which model was present during the 2014 referendum and to assess whether or not this was a shift since 1997.

The model of centre-periphery relations can also explain how the SWPs, and in particular the governing parties, deal with matters of high and low politics. Focusing on high politics matters, means focusing on those issues that are essential to the survival of the state. Convery (2013) mentions the examples of economic, fiscal and foreign politics. Central governments are usually the authority focusing on these high politics issues, and are generally inclined to stay in control over these matters (ibid.). Low politics matters however, are those issues not essential to the survival of the state. Nevertheless, they can still become controversial. Convery (ibid.) mentions the examples of hospitals, nurseries and roads. What becomes clear, is that the central government has been able to hold on to the high politics matters on a large scale, mostly devolving low politics matters (ibid.).

How a certain policy area is perceived by political parties, as a matter of high politics or low politics, could influence the parties' behavior (ibid.). Therefore, the concepts of high and low politics are taken into account in this thesis' theoretical framework. The theoretical expectation is, that when a party sees an issue as a high politics issue, they are more likely to act upon this issue, than when it is perceived as a low politics issue. What is added to this, is that it is possible that an issue that was previously considered as a low politics issue, could be promoted to be considered as a high politics issue by political parties. When an issue is promoted, it is more likely to influence parties' behavior.

2.5 Overview of the Theoretical Framework

So far, this section has discussed the theoretical insights that form the theoretical framework. The framework consists of seven different theoretical insights, these have been presented in figure 1 below. As shown in there, most of the approaches fit within Hopkin's (2009) idea of a party centered approach. In these approaches the political party is the central actor deciding how to act on certain issues. Convery's (2013) approach is separate, because this approach revolves around high and low

politics, arguing that how a policy issue is perceived, could influence parties' behavior. So, it relates to the theoretical framework as presented, but cannot be placed within the hierarchy. The two approaches that relate directly to Hopkin's (2009) approach are by Mazzoleni (2009) and Swenden and McEwen (2014). Mazzoleni (2009) has theorized that parties only pay attention to devolution or decentralization when it is in their competitive political interest to do so, which is when the issue becomes salient. It is expected, that the three national unionist parties did not pay attention to devolution, until they were forced to. Furthermore, Mazzoleni (ibid.) argues that once the issue becomes salient, it could also lead to parties changing their stance on devolution, as is expected was the case with the Conservatives. On the other hand,

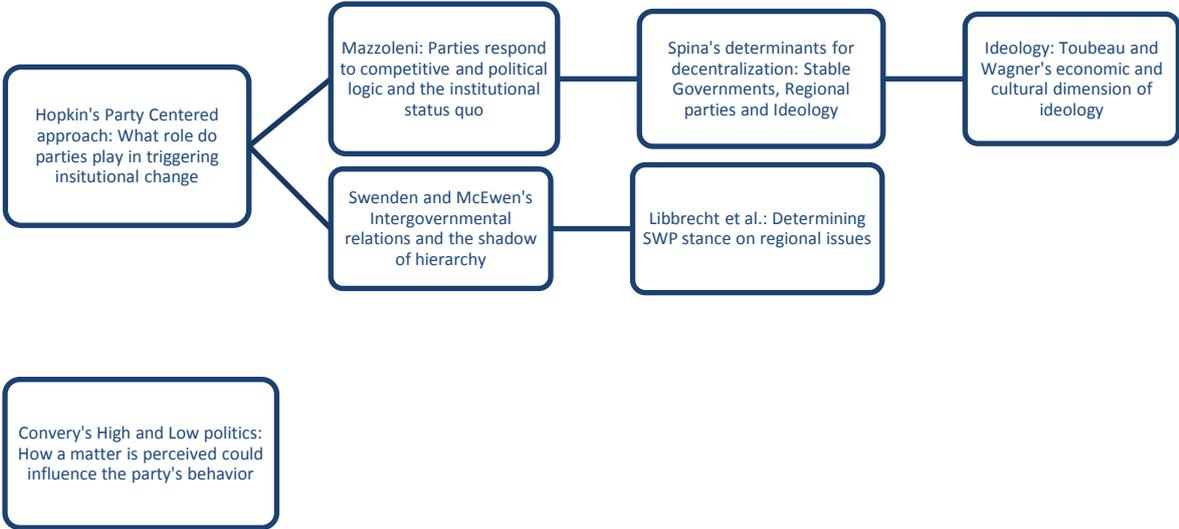


Figure 2.1: Overview of the theoretical framework

it is expected that Swenden and McEwen's (2014) theoretical approach on intergovernmental relations and the shadow of hierarchy provides another important explanation for the vow, because it is likely that the behavior of Scottish Government during the campaign could have put pressure on the national parties to promise further devolution.

Spina (2013) and Toubeau and Wagner's (2013) approaches relate to Mazzoleni (2009) in the sense that they provide additional explanations for parties supporting devolution. Spina (2013) tests government determinants and Toubeau and Wagner, look at the ideological rationalization for supporting devolution. These approaches are included both as context, and as an additional test for Mazzoleni's (2009) framework. Finally, Libbrecht *et al's* (2011) theoretical approach relates to Swenden and McEwen's (2014), because the way that national parties determine their stance on regional issues could be influenced by intergovernmental relations.

2.6 Hypotheses

This chapter so far has presented the theoretical approaches that form this section's theoretical framework. The case-specific expectations for each theoretical approach are discussed and translated into hypotheses in this section, creating 10 hypotheses which are confirmed or rejected in the empirical section. The approaches expected to hold the greatest explanatory power are the ones by Mazzoleni (2009) and Swenden and McEwen (2014). The model does not formulate hypotheses on Hopkin (2009), as his approach does not allow forming any concrete expectations regarding this case. The hypotheses are formulated in the order from the model in figure 2.1.

From Mazzoleni's (2009) perspective, the expectation for this case is that during the referendum campaign, the national parties and their regional counterparts will only pay attention to, and if needed change their stance of devolution, if it appears not doing so will lead to great electoral costs. Furthermore, they are only expected to support devolution and make concrete promises in this regard (the vow), if it is expected to be in their competitive advantage. If this is case, they are more likely to support devolution. Therefore, the hypotheses derived from Mazzoleni (ibid.) state:

H1: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will pay attention to devolution during the referendum campaign

H2a: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will be willing to make concrete promises on further devolution

H2b: If the three main parties make concrete promises on devolution, these promises will fit their competitive advantage

For Spina (2013), the following expectations regarding the case apply. The Westminster government is powerful (percentage of the parties' legislative seats) and stable (no or minor threats from alternative majority governments that could be formed by different parties) compared to previous governments the presence of a relatively strong Scottish regionalist party in the national legislature is expected as well. These factors, according to Spina (ibid.) are likely to lead to decentralization, which indirectly happened when the party leaders signed the vow. Therefore, the hypothesis derived from Spina (ibid.) states:

H3: If the Westminster Government is stable, powerful and there is a presence of a strong regionalist party, this is more likely to lead to devolution

From Toubreau and Wagner's (2013) approach, it is expected the Conservatives, Labour and the Liberal Democrats potentially made a trade-off between their economic and cultural dimension, which has led to them all supporting decentralization, during the referendum. Toubreau and Wagner (ibid.) would expect this trade-off being made on either the economic or cultural dimension, so the parties decided to support devolution during the referendum for reasons that fit in either the economic, or the cultural dimension. Since the referendum can be seen within a cultural dimension,

rather than within the economic dimension, parties that are not supportive of devolution in the cultural dimension, are expected to have made a trade-off on this cultural dimension. Therefore, the hypothesis derived from Toubeau and Wagner (ibid.) states:

H4: If a party has only economic or cultural reasons for supporting devolution, they have made a trade-off on one of these dimensions in order to support devolution, which makes them less inclined to make promises in the vow

From Swenden and McEwen's (2014) approach, the question arises what happens to the shadow of hierarchy in combination with party incongruence during the referendum, when independence becomes an option. The expectation for the case of the referendum is that the central Westminster government will be less able to use the shadow of hierarchy to its advantage, as they did when they made the decision for a single question on the referendum ballot, since Scottish Government will attempt to release them from this shadow. Combined with party incongruence, it is expected that the shadow of hierarchy will be less present during the referendum; Scottish Government is likely to attempt to release itself from the shadow of hierarchy, which could in turn put pressure on the UK central government, and could have led to the national party leaders signing the vow. Therefore, the hypotheses derived from Swenden and McEwen (2014) state:

H5a: If the shadow of hierarchy is less present during the referendum campaign, then Scottish Government will present themselves as holding more autonomy, making plans post-independence

H5b: If Scottish Government presents themselves as holding more autonomy, then it is likely there will be more pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence.

From Libbrecht *et al* (2011) it follows that whether the party leaders considered the referendum as a regional or state-wide affair, could have influenced their behavior. It is expected that when a referendum is considered to be an entirely regional affair, national party leaders will not actively engage in the debate. However, when it is considered to be a state-wide affair, national party leaders are more likely to engage in the debate. How the referendum is perceived therefore, is likely to influence what happens during the campaign. Also, if a shift from regional to state-wide occurs, it is likely that the behavior of parties and their leaders change.

What is expected to appear in the case of the 2014 referendum is that none of the state wide parties would contradict themselves regarding independence and devolution. Regarding additional devolution, it is expected that regional candidates and national candidates are uniform in either supporting or opposing this. Either they have a pro-devolution standpoint regional and national, or they have an anti-devolution standpoint national and regional. Furthermore, "SWPs could be expected to adopt their comparatively most pro-regionalist profile in regional elections due to the more 'regionalist atmosphere' in which regional elections take place" (ibid., p.628). So, if the 2014 referendum is perceived by the SWPs as a regional election, this would mean that the SWP regional

candidates could derive from the national standpoint, if however it is perceived as more of a national election, the expectation is different. In this case, the regional candidates cannot derive from the national standpoint. Therefore, the hypotheses derived from Libbrecht *et al* (2011) state:

H6a: If Scottish Parties have deviated from national standpoints on devolution in the past, it is more likely they will do so during the referendum

H6b: If the referendum is considered a regional issue, then Scottish Parties could, though not necessarily will deviate from national standpoints on devolution

H7: If the referendum is considered a national issue, the national parties determine the party line on devolution, and this line will be backed by the Scottish parties

From Convery (2013), it follows that when a party considers an issue during the campaign as a high politics issue, they are more likely to act upon this issue, than when it is perceived as a low politics issue. So, if the referendum and devolution is seen as a high politics issue, it is more likely that SWP would act, thus for instance coming to the vow. What is added to this is the possibility that an issue that was previously considered as a low politics issue could be promoted to be considered as a high politics issue by political parties. When an issue is promoted, this is then likely to influence parties' behavior as well. This could account for the fact that it took the SWP's national prominent figure a relatively long time to become involved in the referendum, only doing so during the last weeks of the referendum. Therefore, the hypotheses derived from Convery (2013) state:

H8: If the referendum is considered a high politics issue, it is more likely national parties get involved in the campaign

H9: If the central issues in the campaign are high, national parties are more likely to get involved in the campaign

H10: It is likely that promises on devolution will address the same issues (high/low) as the main issues during the campaign, if possible

This chapter has presented the theoretical framework of this thesis and the case-specific hypotheses. The next chapter operationalizes the hypotheses, and presents the data and methods that are employed. This will allow the theoretical framework to be applied to the case of the 2014 Scottish independence referendum.

3. Methods

This section elaborates on how the theoretical framework will be employed. First, the central concepts and operationalization of the hypotheses are discussed. Second, the two methods of process-tracing and content analysis in my case study design are discussed, as these are employed in order to answer the research question. A common method used in case-studies is process-tracing. This method starts at a particular outcome, and looks back in history at potential elements that may have contributed to causing this outcome. Therefore, this method is applied in order to answer this thesis' research question, explaining the vow. It is largely based on newspaper articles, as there was no academic overview of the referendum campaign at the time of writing. Furthermore, in order to answer several of the sub-questions, content analysis is employed on proposals for more power for Scotland and party programs. Finally, an overview of the data and data selection is provided.

3.1 Central concepts and operationalizing the hypotheses

3.1.1 Central Concepts

Before moving on to operationalizing the hypotheses that were formulated in the last chapter, this section identifies and defines the central concepts of this thesis. The first central concept is devolution or decentralization. Devolution is defined here as "The process of transferring (devolving) power from central government to a lower or regional level" (Deacon, 2012, p.21). This thesis is concerned with the decision made before the independence referendum of 2014, to further devolve powers from the Westminster government to Scotland. Hence, the vow is considered as an act of devolution here. Toubeau and Wagner (2013) define decentralization as "the transfer of power to regional governments" (p.98). These definitions of decentralization and devolution do not contradict each other, hence the two concepts were used interchangeably in the theoretical framework and throughout this thesis.

The other central concepts are derived from the theoretical framework that was designed in the last chapter. First, intergovernmental relations is defined here as relationships between various levels of government (Swenden and McEwen, 2014). Specifically for this case study, it refers to the relations between the Westminster government and the Scottish government. Second, the shadow of hierarchy, defined here as the situation in which the national government still holds sovereignty, hence it is still possible to take devolved powers back, make more matters into reserved matters and the regional level and central government often determines the budgets of regional government. The third and final central concept defined here, is the concept of high and low politics. Convery (2013) defines high politics to include matters as major economic, financial and foreign policy, with low politics including any matters not related to this, including any devolved matters. When these

concepts also appear in the formulated hypotheses, they are further operationalized in the next section.

3.1.2 Operationalizing the hypotheses

Mazzoleni's (2009) approach provides the following hypotheses:

H1: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will pay attention to devolution during the referendum campaign

H2a: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will be willing to make concrete promises on further devolution

H2b: If the three main parties make concrete promises on devolution, these promises will fit their competitive advantage

These hypotheses refer to competitive advantage, defined here as anything that is likely to profit any or all of the state wide parties at the cost of the Scottish Government, the SNP, or the yes campaign in general. In order for devolution, or any other issue, to become salient during a campaign, it has to be mentioned several times by newspapers. Second, concrete promises on devolution is defined here as a promise regarding a certain issue or policy area. For instance a promise to devolve further tax powers is considered a concrete promise, but a promise to devolve new powers, is not considered concrete. In order to see whether the relationships these hypotheses expect were in fact present, the vow and other relevant proposals for more power are analyzed in order to find out what the vow and other proposals really promised, what issues were addressed and to see whether it is possible to see each parties' competitive advantage in these. The analysis of these proposals can be found in Appendix 3. Furthermore, additional information from the reconstruction is used.

Spina's (2013) approach provides the following hypothesis:

H3: If the Westminster Government is stable, powerful and there is a presence of a strong regionalist party, this is more likely to lead to devolution

In order to measure whether the Westminster Government is stable and powerful, the same method Spina (ibid.) uses is employed here as well. In order to determine whether a government is powerful and stable, he employs the Banzhaf power index. This index calculates the power of parties by looking at the number of alternative coalitions that would be able to cause the turn of a minority to a majority, providing a scale of 0 to 1, with a higher number indicating a stronger and more stable government, according to Spina (ibid.). Due to the nature of the calculation the index uses, single-party majority governments automatically receive a score of 1, because no alternative coalitions are possible that could turn a decision. This means that due to of the nature of the British party system, most governments throughout British history would receive a score on 1 in this index. To measure the presence of a regionalist party, the seats of the SNP in the Westminster government are

measured, as Spina (ibid.) theorized that the presence of a strong regionalist party in the national legislature is likely to lead to decentralization. In order to determine this, it is measured whether the SNP in 2010 had a significant higher number of seats than in 2001 and 2005. The result of this analysis can be found in Appendix 7.

Toubeau and Wagner's (2013) approach provides the following hypothesis:

H4: If a party has only economic or cultural reasons for supporting devolution, they have made a trade-off on one of these dimensions in order to support devolution, which makes them less inclined to make promises in the vow

First, the concept of an economic and cultural reason is operationalized. As stated in the theoretical chapter, the economic dimension is about efficiency and redistribution issues. Therefore, any mention of devolution as a result of better efficiency or redistribution of funds or tasks is considered an economic reason. An example is to devolve tax powers, as it would be more efficient for the Scottish Government to tax Scots, than for the Westminster government to do so. Another example of an economic reason to support devolution is to support setting speed limits in Scotland, as there is more knowledge in Scotland regarding what speed limit would work. The cultural dimension revolves around identity or cultural preferences. This sees devolution more as intrinsically important, which is right to employ. When parties refer to partnership, devolution leading to a better state, the identity and culture of Scotland, these are considered as cultural reasons to support devolution. It has to be clear that devolution is not just an efficient way to rule a country, but more importantly that devolution is the way a country should be ruled. The party manifestos of the SWP and the SNP from the 2010 general elections and the 2011 Scottish elections are analyzed in order to determine the nature of their reasons to support devolution, which can be found in Appendix 5.

Swenden and McEwen's (2014) approach provides the following hypotheses:

H5a: If the shadow of hierarchy is less present during the referendum campaign, then Scottish Government will present themselves as holding more autonomy, making plans post-independence

H5b: If Scottish Government presents themselves as holding more autonomy, then it is likely there will be more pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence.

An indication that the shadow of hierarchy is less present is Scottish Government presenting themselves as holding more autonomy. This is the case for instance when Scottish Government is making policy promises they could only fulfill in the event of independence, or when they are actively distancing themselves from Westminster policies. H4b refers to pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence. This pressure is slightly harder to operationalize as it can be both visible, newspaper articles can for instance call for the party leaders to present an alternative to independence, but also invisible, within the parties or the no campaign. In order to see whether

the relationships these hypotheses expect were actually present in the case, the reconstruction is taken as the main source of information, because how Scottish government has presented itself is discussed as a central theme there, and the reaction of the national parties on the behavior of Scottish government is discussed there as well.

Libbrecht *et al*'s (2011) approach provides the following hypotheses:

H6a: If Scottish Parties have deviated from national standpoints on devolution in the past, it is more likely they will do so during the referendum

H6b: If the referendum is considered a regional issue, then Scottish Parties could, though not necessarily will deviate from national standpoints on devolution

H7: If the referendum is considered a national issue, the national parties determine the party line on devolution, and this line will be backed by the Scottish parties

In order to use the first hypothesis no definitions have to be operationalized further. The party manifestos of the three main parties from the 2010 general election and the 2011 Scottish elections are analyzed, to see whether Scottish parties take different stances on devolution when it is discussed in a regional setting, such as the Scottish elections. If the Scottish Parties have deviated from national standpoints on devolution in the past, it is more likely they will do so again, especially during the referendum campaign, as this setting provides Scotland with the opportunity to become independent. The complete coding and analysis of the party manifestos can be found in Appendix 5. In order to use the second hypothesis, it has to be determined whether the referendum is considered a national or a regional issue. In order to determine this, an overview is set up of hits on the referendum in quality newspapers. The Herald is used as the Scottish newspaper, and first an overview is created with the Independent and Independent on Sunday as the national newspaper. It is likely to get a higher number of hits in the Herald, as it is a Scottish newspaper covering the Scottish independence referendum. The aim is to check whether the coverage of the referendum in the national newspaper deviates extensively in the number of hits. As an extra check, a second newspaper, the Daily and Sunday Telegraph, were also added to the overview. If there is a large difference in coverage, with only the Scottish newspaper covering the referendum significantly, it is considered a regional issue. If the national newspapers also write regularly about the referendum, it is considered a national issue.

Convery's (2013) approach provides the following hypotheses:

H8: If the referendum is considered a high politics issue, it is more likely national parties get involved in the campaign

H9: If the central issues in the campaign are high, national parties are more likely to get involved in the campaign

H10: It is likely that promises on devolution will address the same issues (high/low) as the main issues during the campaign, if possible

Convery's (ibid.) concepts of high and low politics or issues are operationalized here. He states that high politics include matters as major economic, financial and foreign policy (ibid., p26). Low politics then, is everything that is not related to the major economic, financial and foreign policy. Therefore, most issues can be considered low politics. Furthermore, Convery (ibid.) states that devolved matters are all examples of low politics (p.26). From this statement, the argument can be made that since Scottish Parliament can legislate on anything apart from the reserved matters, all reserved matters are high politics issues, whereas the non-reserved matters are low politics issues. It might therefore seem that the category of low politics becomes so broad that everything is considered low politics rendering it meaningless. This was however, not the case for the independence referendum. In fact, it turned out most issues during the campaign were high politics, as is discussed in the analysis. The issues that are labeled high or low politics are the referendum itself and the main issues during the campaign. These issues were selected from the chronological reconstruction made before the final version, in which these issues were mentioned most often, and are therefore considered central issues.

3.2 Process-Tracing and Content Analysis

3.2.1 Process-Tracing

Process-tracing methods are tools employed in order to study causal mechanisms in a research design that consists of a single case study (Beach and Bun Pedersen, 2013). This thesis studies which conditions have led to the party leaders of the UK's three main parties to sign the vow. The theoretical insights that have been discussed give various options, which are researched in order to answer the question and find what mechanisms have been at play. Possible relations could be the changing competitive advantage of parties, polls, the behavior of Scottish Government and pressure from the Scottish parties. These could have influenced the three main party leaders' behavior which led to signing the vow. This section first discusses the method of process tracing in general.

Process-tracing, according to Beach and Bun Pedersen (ibid.), can be divided into three variants: theory-testing, theory-building and explaining-outcome. Theory-testing process-tracing takes an existing theory and tests whether evidence in a certain case shows that the hypothesized causal mechanism is present and acted as expected. The causal mechanism explains how X led to Y. So it explains for instance how the polls have led to the party leaders signing the vow. By using the theory-testing process-tracing, one cannot conclude that other causes and mechanisms have not been at play (ibid.). Theory-building process-tracing aims at building a generalizable theoretical explanation from empirical evidence. It aims to infer a more general causal mechanism that could

exist from the facts of a particular case (ibid.). However, according to Beach and Bun Pedersen (ibid.), guidelines on how to employ this approach remain unclear.

The final variant is the explaining-outcome process tracing. "Explaining-outcome process-tracing is an iterative strategy that aims to trace the complex conglomerate of systematic and case-specific causal mechanisms that produced the outcome in question" (ibid., p.19). This variant aims to craft a (minimally) sufficient explanation of an outcome that can be considered puzzling in a specific case. It revolves around seeking the causes of a certain outcome in a specific case (ibid.). This is the variant of process tracing that is employed in this thesis. This type of process-tracing is more case-centric, rather than theory-oriented like the other two variants, focusing on a particular phenomenon in a case that is puzzling. Therefore, it is the best fit for this thesis, which is focused explaining the phenomenon of the vow. This is not to say however, that the explaining-outcome variant does not hold any theoretical goals, usually these studies have theoretical ambitions that reach beyond the single case study. Furthermore, this type of process-tracing aims for sufficient explanations unlike the other two types (ibid.). For this thesis, that is also the case. The theoretical approaches included in the party-centered theoretical framework were selected for this case, but are also employable in any other case of a decision to further decentralize or devolve, where it is questioned whether it can be considered a strategic move, or whether other conditions are also at play.

The inductive path is followed, which is often used when a little-studied outcome is examined, as is the case here. This inductive path starts from the empirical level, usually with the outcome, tracing back using the evidence and trying to build a plausible explanation for various causal mechanisms. Regarding the theoretical insights that have been discussed, these can all be employed by a combination of process-tracing and content analysis. Process-tracing is employed here to create a reconstruction which allows for uncovering multiple potential causes that could have eventually led to the party leaders signing the vow. A reconstruction of main events before the start of the campaign is made from the official timeline of Scottish Parliament. The reconstruction of the campaign period itself is done by selecting newspaper articles from Scottish quality newspaper the Scotsman, in order to include any relevant development. After a chronological first version of the reconstruction, it is divided in relevant themes and discussed in this way in the next chapter.

3.2.2 Content Analysis

According to Prior (2014) content analysis is usually associated with "the study of inscription contained in published reports, newspapers, adverts, books, web pages, journals, and other forms of documentation" (p.360). Content analysis is mostly viewed by scholars as a method of analysis that is text-based, although it could also travel to forms of inscripational material such as television programs

(ibid.). This thesis focuses on the content analysis of party programs, proposals for more power and hits on newspaper articles regarding certain issues, in order to answer the questions that were formulated in the introduction. Which data was selected exactly and how is discussed in section 3.3.

So, several documents were selected for several purposes, depending on the hypothesis it is linked to. Sometimes a piece of data was used more than once, in order to look at it from several theoretical approaches. First, an overview of all data that was employed was created. This overview consists of the several theoretical approaches, and the data that is used to employ these approaches. Then, a code sheet was created which again consists of the theoretical approaches, the data employed and the words that were selected on, and the questions that were asked in order to analyze the texts. The code sheet ensures that all data is looked at in the same way, asking the same questions for each piece of data. The unit of analysis was fragments that were analyzed in order to grasp the meaning of the content. These fragments were however selected on keywords, depending on the theoretical approach. These can be found on the code sheet. The overview of the data and the code sheet are added in Appendices 1 and 2.

3.3 Data and data selection

3.3.1 Data

The aim of this thesis is to find out which conditions influenced the national party leaders to sign the vow. In order to do this, a reconstruction is made from newspaper articles to identify the main events during the campaign period. Furthermore, a content analysis of the vow and other proposals for more powers is conducted, in order to see whether the vow and other proposals discussed issues that had more of a high politics, or a low politics character, and whether the content of the vow and other proposals align more with ideology (Toubeau and Wagner, 2013) or with competitive and political logic (Mazzoleni, 2009).

Second, newspaper articles from the Scotsman (Scottish quality newspaper) are used for the purpose of creating the reconstruction, and hits of newspaper articles from the Herald (Scottish quality newspaper), the Independent (national quality newspaper) and the Daily Telegraph (national quality newspaper) for analysis¹. From the Scotsman articles it is reconstructed how the parties acted during the campaign, what the main events leading up to the campaign were, and the main events during the campaign, such as the proposals for further powers, the yes and no campaign, how Scottish and national governments acted and what the salient issues were during the campaign.

¹ Originally, the aim was to use only one Scottish newspaper, the Scotsman. However, the reconstruction was done before the newspaper hits analysis, and by the time the reconstruction was finished, the LexisNexis subscription from Radboud University changed, which meant the articles from the Scotsman could no longer be accessed.

Third, the party programs of the three SWPs and the SNP of the 2010 elections are analyzed, in order to see whether they were at this point supporting or opposing further devolution and to see whether Scottish Parties deviated from the national party line on devolution. Finally the party programs are analyzed to see whether the support for devolution can be considered as belonging to the cultural or economic dimension. Polls are used in the reconstruction and analysis to illustrate various developments.

3.3.2 Data selection: Reconstruction

The reconstruction of the next section is meant to give an overview of the main events that happened during the referendum campaign period which eventually lead to the vow. As mentioned above, the reconstruction was written per relevant theme. First, a reconstruction of the main events leading up to the referendum campaign was designed. Then, an overall chronological reconstruction for each day between 30 May and 18 September 2014 was set up, through a Lexis Nexis power search (Appendix 4). The Scotsman was used, as it is a Scottish quality newspaper, so it was expected that there would be a broader coverage of referendum-related events than would be the case with a national newspaper. An additional source was used in the form of a published diary about the referendum campaign written by David Torrance (2014), a freelance journalist. From the broad, chronological reconstruction, a shortened version was written based on relevant themes. These themes were derived from the theoretical framework that was set up in the previous section. The framework focuses on different aspects, and from these the themes were set up.

The first theme that will be discussed is devolution, more specifically the proposals for more power that were made during the referendum period. Clearly, this has to be a theme because it is the main focus of this thesis and the aspect of timing can be viewed this way as well. The reconstruction does not specifically look at the proposals themselves, or for instance the polls, as these are discussed in the analysis. The focus will be the circumstances under which the proposals were made, the highlights and the reactions.

The second theme relates to Swenden and McEwen's (2014) theory on intergovernmental relations and the shadow of hierarchy in the UK. Specifically, this theme focuses on promises made by Scottish Government during the campaign period, specifically because during this time the shadow of hierarchy will take new form. Swenden and McEwen (ibid.) theorize that the shadow will be there if different parties rule different governments, which is the case. However, during the campaign period the Scottish Government will see opportunity to release themselves from the shadow in the event of independence. Whether and how Scottish Government does this potentially gives some explanation for the reaction of the national parties, the vow.

The third theme focuses on the presence of the national parties and government in the campaign, which relates to both the second theme and the work by Libbrecht *et al* (2011), who focus on national parties and their stances on regional issues. The final theme relates to the work by Convery (2013), and focuses on issues that were central during the campaign, both 'high' and 'low' issues. Issues discussed are among others currency, defence, the NHS and the EU/NATO.

3.3.3 Data selection newspaper articles, proposals and party manifestos

The proposals for devolution were selected in the following manner; the vow is included, because this is the main topic of this thesis. Then, any other proposals made by parties or party members that were discovered during the reconstruction are included, the list and coding can be found in Appendix 3. Regarding newspaper articles for the analysis on the hits on certain issues, once again a Lexis Nexis power search is set up in order to select articles from the Herald (as a Scottish quality newspaper) and the Independent (as a national quality newspaper). Once again, the subject Referendum was added, but combined with the issue, in order to make sure the issue was discussed in the context of the referendum. Then, an overview was created providing hits per week on the referendum, to identify potential differences between regional and national coverage and to see whether different issues were important at a regional or national level. The party manifestos included in the content analysis were the national party manifestos of 2010 and the regional party manifestos of 2011, in order to see their pre-referendum stances on devolution.

4.1 Inside the referendum

4.1 Historical background of the referendum

This chapter first sets out the main events that led to (the decision to have) a referendum for Scottish independence. Then, it moves on to a reconstruction of the main events in the last 100 days before the referendum, based on relevant themes, in order to detect conditions which made it possible for the vow to occur. The goal of this reconstruction is to give a clear overview of relevant developments in the months and years leading up to the referendum, giving insights when looking for causes of the vow. Its findings are also employed in the analysis.

4.1.1 1997 Devolution

This section starts with the events that have led to Scotland being able to pressure for an independence referendum. The 1997 referendum, held in Scotland and Wales, led to devolution of powers from Westminster to Edinburgh. After the landslide victory of the Labour party in the 1997 general election, the Labour government decided to hold a referendum in Scotland and Wales on the question of the establishment of a Scottish Parliament and Welsh Assembly, as was a campaign promise. Before Labour's win, there had been a long period of Conservative governments, in which various governments had taken back many local powers, always opposing devolution as devolution would supposedly lead to the UK breaking up (Deacon, 2012). During these times, the Conservatives only allowed for devolution towards Northern Ireland, which had extraordinary circumstances due to the unrest caused by the troubles (ibid.). During the 1997 referendum campaign, the Conservatives also opposed a referendum on devolution, and during the referendum campaign they opposed a yes vote. In 2009, current party leader David Cameron admitted the Conservatives were wrong to oppose devolution during the 1990s (BBC, 27 June 2009). Labour and the Liberal Democrats did support devolution. Shortly before the 1997 general election, Labour and the Liberal Democrats agreed to the *Partnership For Britain's Future*. It was a document that set out an agreement between the two parties on constitutional principles for Britain, and stated that both parties would support Labour's devolution proposals if Labour should win, which became reality (Deacon, 2012).

In this referendum, which took place on 11 September 1997, a large majority of the Scots voted in favor of a Scottish Parliament that would have tax-varying powers. The consequence of this referendum was the 1998 Scotland Act, creating a Scottish Parliament and a Scottish Executive, with elections taking place once every four years. The idea of an independence referendum for Scotland is first seriously considered by the SNP during the 2007 elections. These elections were won by the SNP, who were able to form a minority government, but they did not have enough support in Parliament to push for an independence referendum. Therefore, the idea for an independence referendum was set aside until the 2011 elections, when the SNP won a majority of the seats in

Parliament, which allowed for enough support for the referendum. Due to the fact that the SNP now had a majority in Scottish Parliament, Westminster recognized the Scottish Government's mandate to hold an independence referendum.

4.1.2 Constitutional future consultation and response

Not long after the 2011 elections and the consensus between Scottish Parliament and Westminster on a binding referendum, Scotland's Constitutional Future Consultation paper was launched in January 2012 by the national government. This consultation paper was meant as a way to set out options for the two governments to remove the legal barriers, so the referendum could be held in a fair, legal and decisive way (Government, 2012a). Furthermore, it invited the people of Scotland to express their views on how the referendum should be held, and stated that Westminster wanted to cooperate with Scotland to take away the legal barriers and organize the referendum, despite making clear the Westminster government did not believe in an independent Scotland. What also became clear from the foreword of the Secretary of State for Scotland, Michael Moore, is that since the elections, the UK government had apparently asked Scottish Government on how their thoughts on the referendum, without receiving response. "We have been asking the Scottish Government to explain its position since May last year, but the Scottish Government has not set out a formal view on the issue of legal competence nor come forward with any further proposals for a referendum" (ibid., p.6). This paints a picture of the UK government taking the organization of the referendum in their own hands, as the position of the Scottish Government does not become clear. Regarding the question that should be asked during the referendum, the paper set out the wish of Scottish Government to have a two question referendum, about independence and further powers (Government, 2012b). The UK Government presented its view that "independence and further devolution are different issues and should be considered separately" (ibid., p.22).

In May 2012 a report discussing the nearly 3000 reactions to the consultation paper was published, as well as further actions that would be taken in order to organize the referendum. As mentioned above, the consultation did not revolve around Scotland's role in the UK, but about "the mechanics of ensuring a fair referendum rather than the implications of the result" (ibid., p.5). According to the response paper, there was a clear support among the reactions for a legislative order, and among the Scottish Government, that would give the Scottish Parliament the opportunity to hold the referendum, which resulted in the Edinburgh agreement. The response paper also recognized that Scottish Government aimed for a two-question referendum, with a question about further powers for Scotland, and a second question about independence. This question turned out to be the most answered question in the consultation (ibid.). The UK government held the position that there should be one question on the ballot: the question of independence. According to the response

paper, 75% of the responses agreed with the UK government's statement (ibid., p.21). The reason behind this was that most respondents felt that a single question would better ensure a more decisive outcome on the main issue of whether Scotland would remain within the UK. Based on this, and the view of the UK government that the question of independence and of further devolution should be viewed separately (ibid., p.22), David Cameron defended a one question referendum at the signing of the Edinburgh Agreement. Knowing this, the question of why the party leaders decided to promise further devolution two days before the referendum, becomes all the more relevant.

4.1.3 Yes and No campaign launches

The next relevant development in the period leading up to the referendum was the launch of the Yes Scotland campaign on 25 May 2012. The campaign's chief executive was Blair Jenkins, who was not affiliated to any political party and was known for his impartiality in the world of news (Rowat, 2012). The Yes Scotland campaign was in fact nonpartisan it could be seen more as a grassroots movement. It represented various parties (SNP, Scottish Greens and the Scottish Socialist party), organizations and individuals, though the SNP and First Minister and SNP leader Alex Salmond were considered to be the main driving force (ibid.). Their goal was an independent Scotland after the 2014 referendum.

Furthermore, a short time after the campaign launch in 2012, it became clear that the campaign aimed only for an independent Scotland. As a nonpartisan campaign, it was not their goal to take a stand on positions as NATO or what to do with currency, though they did support a two question referendum about additional devolution (ibid.). Jenkins said that the referendum was about who should be making the decisions for Scotland, not about which decisions would then be made. That would be a matter for elections. This however, is not how the campaign for the referendum progressed. Later on, Yes Scotland lost their grip on the firm yes/no, and the question of independence did become more complicated with issues such as NATO and especially currency playing an important role.

The Better Together campaign, campaigning for a no vote, launched a month later, 26 June 2012. The Better Together campaign was a cross-party campaign receiving support from the main union parties, (Scottish) Labour, the (Scottish) Conservatives and the (Scottish) Liberal Democrats, but acted as an independent body. The campaign leader was Alistar Darling who, unlike the campaign leader of Yes Scotland, had a clear political profile, as he had been chancellor in Gordon Brown's Labour Government. The three union parties decided to unite and work together on this campaign, aiming to make a positive case for staying together, hence campaigning for this together also (BBC, 2012). In the end, their campaign was successful, with a majority of no voters at the referendum. However, their campaign was criticized for being too negative, incoherent and for the way they ruled out a currency union (Watt, 2014).

Later on in the campaign, Gordon Brown, former Labour Prime Minister, got actively involved in another campaign aiming at a no vote. The United with Labour campaign was organized by prominent Labour members had the same aims as the Better Together campaign and was launched a year after Better Together (Brooks, 2014). Brown gave speeches at rallies for both Better Together and United with Labour and (co)created several plans for a post-referendum Scotland within the UK. These plans included the vow which was brokered by Gordon Brown and signed by the national party leaders (Clegg, 2014). The national party leaders got involved later on in the campaign. A possible explanation could be the early lead of no voters in the poll, which became smaller and eventually disappeared (What Scotland Thinks, 2015a). In fact, a majority of yes voters was measured in 2 polls, on 5 and 12 September, whereas a total 28 polls were conducted from August 1 until September 17 on the question *Should Scotland be an independent country*, according to What Scotland Thinks (2015a). Overall though, it was still believed that the result of the referendum would be a 'no' on the question of independence (Sparrow, 2014).

The main difference between the campaigns seems to be the fact that Yes Scotland is a nonpartisan campaign, and did not have a clear political profile, whereas Better Together clearly did. Even though they were officially an independent body, their key players consisted of members from the union parties, which was not necessarily the case for Yes Scotland. It could be the case that because Yes Scotland wanted to maintain their nonpartisan character, it made it more difficult for them to answer questions from the media and the electorate about Scotland after the referendum. For example, questions on currency, the EU, NATO and the North Sea oil revenues. The Better Together campaign used this lack of answers by picturing an independent Scotland as an unsure Scotland, with people not knowing what they would vote for in the end. This is also a reason why the Better Together campaign were deemed by the media and the people as being a negative campaign, spreading mostly insecurity about independence (What Scotland Thinks 2015b; Macwhirter, 2014; Watt, 2014).

4.1.4 The Edinburgh Agreement and the Scottish Government's White paper

The next step was the Edinburgh agreement, which constitutionally paved the way for the referendum to be held along with the Scottish independence referendum act of 2013. It ensured that the national and Scottish Government would work together to ensure the referendum would take place, and that the referendum would be legal and decisive (the Scottish Government, 2012) The Edinburgh Agreement was based on the reactions on the consultation paper. During the signing, the question that would be asked during the referendum was announced as well. The question was *Should Scotland be an independent country?* this could be answered with either a yes or a no. The Scottish Government wanted to include a possibility of further devolution (Sharp *et al*, 2014;

Government 2012a; Government 2012b). If Salmond and Cameron had agreed on a third option of further devolution, the vow would not have been created. It can therefore be concluded that the first occurrence that has made it possible for the vow to occur was the decision to opt for a binary question.

The section 30 order was agreed on by the Commons and the Lords in January 2013, giving Scotland the legal right to organize the binding referendum. In March 2013, the date of the referendum was announced, which would be 18 September 2014. The Scottish Parliament also decided that the franchise would be enlarged by allowing 16 and 17 year olds to vote in the referendum. In November 2013, Scottish Government published the White paper: *Scotland's Future, Your Guide to an Independent Scotland*. The 650 pages long White paper made a case for independence, went into Scotland's finances after independence and set out plans for all policy areas (the Scottish Government, 2013). Although the document was extensive in size, it was criticized by the Better Together campaign for being too vague and not addressing some of the most important issues that would be at play after independence (BBC, 2013). Also, the White paper in some senses came across like a party program, with many election promises made about cutting certain taxes, which was the opposite of what the yes campaign aimed at. The White paper did not set out the costs of becoming independent. Finally, after the release of the White paper, Westminster made clear that they would not support a currency union with an independent Scotland, which was an important assumption made in the White paper by the Scottish Government (ibid.).

On 17 December 2013, the Scotland Independence Referendum Bill received royal assent. The referendum was now legal and to be held on 18 September 2014. The result would be binding; Westminster and Scottish Parliament would have to cooperate with whatever the result. The question to be asked was included in the bill, and later in the act, as well (the Scottish Parliament, 2013). These were the main events before the official 100 day campaign period leading up to the referendum. Plans for further devolution made up until this point, had only been made by individual parties. These are listed and coded in Appendix 3.

4.2 Main events of the referendum campaign

4.2.1 Proposals for further devolution

This section discusses what happened right before and during the campaign period regarding proposals that were made for further devolution to Scotland in the event of a no vote. It is important to include these developments in this reconstruction, because this way it will become clear whether the vow was a natural result of earlier proposals or not. The first remark that can be made is that during the campaign period, further devolution was definitely something that was talked about

however; the eventual vow on 16 September still creates somewhat of a puzzle, which is explained below.

In March 2014, the Liberal Democrats' Campbell Commission on home and community rule published its second report which focused on Scotland's role within the UK after the independence referendum. This report and others mentioned in this section are listed and coded in Appendix 3. In the same month, Scottish Labour also published their take on the role of Scotland within the UK and further powers they should receive. Both reports focused on devolution and the fact that Scotland should receive additional powers. In early June, after the start of the official campaign period, the Strathclyde Commission of the Conservative party published their plan for more Scottish powers in case of a no vote. This was somewhat surprising, considering the fact that the Scottish Conservatives were against devolution before, as recent as that they opposed the 2012 Scotland Act, under their current leader Ruth Davidson (Torrance, 2014, p.29). They now officially made the shift from opposing devolution to supporting it. Furthermore, Prime Minister David Cameron supported the recommendations made in the report (Whitaker, 2014b). However, some Tories were critical of the plan, claiming these reports distracted from the main question of the referendum, independence (Maddox, 2014b). Furthermore, in late June, Richard Keen, chairman of the Scottish Conservatives, condemned Labour's devolution proposal as "incoherent, unworkable and confused", undermining coherence between the unionist parties on devolution (Torrance, 2014, p.59), at a time they worked together in the no campaign.

Still, at the start of the official campaign period, further devolution in the event of a no vote was supported by all three unionist parties, although it was not a main issue. The Queen's speech² of 2 June for instance, made no reference to additional powers for Scotland in the event of a no vote (Maddox, 2014c). Gordon Brown however, did call upon the main unionist parties to come together on devolution and negotiate a cross-party deal on a further devolution package (Whitaker, 2014c). Despite his call in early June, it took the parties until 16 September to actually present the vow, which Brown ended up brokering himself. Alistar Darling suggested shortly after Brown's call that the parties would come together to put forward a proposal for additional powers for Scotland, also assuring the public that a no vote would definitely lead to more powers (MacNab, 2014c).

As it turned out, Darling was not talking about a deal in the same way Brown was, as he was referring to the three Scottish Party Leaders pledge of 16 June. This pledge was a "statement of intent" that the Scottish leaders supported further devolution in the event of a no vote, but provided no blueprint of what these powers would entail, or a timetable for implementation (Peterkin, 2014a). David Cameron and Ed Miliband both supported the pledge, but did not officially sign this pledge

² The Queen's speech is the official start of the Parliamentary year in the UK. It sets out the parliament's agenda and its main proposals for legislature (Parliament, 2015)

until 5 August along with Nick Clegg. It was the same version and therefore still did not contain any concrete powers or timetable. Furthermore, poll results published on 18 June, suggested that between one-third and half of the Scots believed they would actually receive new powers in case of a no vote (MacNab, 2014f). On the same day, the Scotsman suggested this put pressure on the party leaders to work out an agreement on paper and present this to Scots, which did not happen until 16 September (MacNab, 2014g). In June though, a large part of the public was not necessarily aware of the proposals made by the parties, as illustrated in Appendix 6.1. Around a month later, polls suggested that 56 per cent of Scots believed more devolution would happen in the event of a no vote, indicating it had increased from the previous month (Peterkin, 2014c).

The fact that the three parties did not plan to come to a deal on paper on devolution during the campaign, is confirmed from the fact that former Scottish Secretary Michael Moore, Liberal Democrat, stated in late June that a deal for more powers between parties was to be struck after the referendum, though he also claims some basic consensus already existed between the national parties on areas such as income tax and housing benefits (MacNab, 2014i). This however, was countered the next day, when former Labour First Minister Jack McConnell stated there was a deal coming between the unionist parties on more devolved and financial powers for Scotland (MacNab, 2014j). If anything, though the parties all promise to support devolution, they are not on the same page at this point on whether a deal should be struck between the three parties during the campaign. This is noticed by some high-placed figures, such as the former chair of the Scottish Constitutional Convention, which put down groundwork for Scottish Parliament, and former Labour First Minister Henry McLeish. They both state in mid-August that devolution in the event of a no-vote is entirely unsure, and encourage people to vote yes, since further powers may not be delivered (Brown, 2014).

Another aspect about the proposals for devolution is whether the rest of the UK would support further devolution, because if this is not the case, they could perhaps block it in the end. According to Professor Richard Wyn Jones, researcher at Cardiff University, the English are not inclined to accommodate Scots after the referendum, whatever the outcome. He stated that the pledges of more power made by the no campaign are not supported by the majority of the English, who would rather see Scottish power limited in Westminster and Scottish public spending cut (MacNab, 2014r). This is the only time during the referendum campaign the Scotsman pays attention to the English opinion on further devolution.

As late as 1 September 2014, Scottish Secretary Alistair Carmichael states that a no vote will lead to more devolution, that enough certainty that this was the case has been provided and new deals between the unionist parties would not be made (Maddox, 2014g). A few days later, Gordon Brown requests time for a debate on a timetable for further powers, but does not mention any new

deal on further powers (MacNab, 2014u). With this request, and the fact that Brown does not, once again, call upon the parties to come to a deal on devolution, it seemed that no deal would be struck. Then, on 8 September, the Scotsman prints the results of the 'shock poll'. This poll was conducted by YouGov and was the first serious poll to give the Yes voters a two-point lead (MacNab, 2014v). Joe Twynam, YouGov expert, states "Ultimately, it comes down to the fact that people are switching sides, but more importantly those who haven't previously known what to do are making a decision and they are going over to Yes" (ibid.).

After this, devolution started to appear more in the Scotsman (again). First, on 8 September, Chancellor George Osborne states that a plan of action on more powers for Scotland will be delivered in the next days (ibid.), which deviates from the previous line. The new powers would consist of tax, spending and welfare state powers, and would also provide Scots with a timetable setting out the process of agreement and implementation (ibid.). On the same day, Gordon Brown presented a plan for more powers for Scotland, including a timetable (ibid.). This however, was pretty much the same plan he already presented in June. It was expected the other parties would join and support the plan, the next day. However, only the Scottish unionist parties leaders decided to back Brown's timetable, not the powers in the plan itself (Torrance, 2014, p.158). The next day, the national party leaders also spoke out in support of the timetable (MacNab, Bradley, Whitaker and Peterkin, 2014). This seemed the end of the devolution proposals a week before the referendum, with the national and Scottish party leaders both backing a timetable for further Scottish powers, without defining what these powers would be.

The Scotsman did not report on the vow, as it appeared in the Daily Record on 16 September. The Daily Record published the vow, a joint statement by David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg that promised more powers for Scotland in the event of a no vote (Clegg, 2014). The agreement was set up by the Daily Record, Gordon Brown and Scottish Labour and gave "Scots who remain unsure about separation complete confidence that, if there is a No vote, Scotland will still be given much more control over its future" (ibid.). The fact that the vow was made by all three parties, should ensure that no matter which party wins the 2015 general elections, Scotland will see further devolution. The content of the vow is discussed in the analysis.

A year after the vow was published, Daily Record Editor Murray Foote, wrote a piece in the Daily Record about how the vow was created (Foote, 2015). He first explains that the Daily Record was pro-union, because they did not believe in the version of independence promoted by Salmond, but still gave equal coverage to both campaigns (ibid.). He then states that the relationship between the Better Together campaign and the Daily Record was rocky and uncomfortable, because of the (traditional) anti-Tory stance of the Daily Record (ibid.). He says Better Together was "shambolic, complacent and lacked direction" because "pounds counted more than principles" (ibid.). The

element of the Better Together campaign Foote sees as "most critically", is the fact that they offered nothing clear regarding new powers for Scotland, something Brown and the Daily Record had been pushing for (ibid.).

The article argues the catalyst of the vow was the shock poll that put the yes campaign ahead for the first time. According to Foote, the poll led to "a slew of unionist politicians of various hues spluttered incoherently through interviews" (ibid.). He states that because of this lack of coherent strategy, apart from the timetable they did agree on, and the lack of clarity on what the new powers were supposed to be, the Daily Record got involved in the devolution issue. They attacked the national party leaders and demanded a commitment on more powers before 18 September, as well as a plan what these powers would entail, so people could make up their minds (ibid.). Then, he states it was both the Daily Record and Gordon Brown, who used to be a political columnist for the Daily Record, that came up with the vow. The Daily Record decided to try and get the party leaders together to "make a joint promise of more powers" which they would all have to sign (ibid.). Brown had to convince David Cameron, and was able to do so because Brown was also the only main figure in the Better Together campaign with ideas on devolution (ibid.). Foote (ibid.) claims that because of the shock poll and the attack by the Daily Record on the party leaders, Cameron took Brown's advice and agreed to go for a joint deal. Foote himself convinced Ed Miliband to join. This, according to Foote, meant that Nick Clegg would have to join also.

The article explains that the vow was written by "a committee of politicians and their aides and the original draft was amended at different times and by different party leaders. Not one word was composed by any Daily Record journalist" (ibid.). The final draft of the vow was sent by Brown's office, which had brokered the vow. It was supposed to be printed on 15 September, but the Daily Record delayed a day because Isis murdered Scottish hostage David Haines (ibid.). Finally, the article states the vow led to the creation of the Smith Commission, which drafted the Scotland Bill; hence the vow will lead to more powers for Scotland, and has therefore reached its aim (ibid.).

Regarding the impact of the vow, shortly after the referendum, Alex Salmond stated the referendum was lost because of the vow (Cramb, 2015). An academic survey however, showed the impact of the vow was marginal and not decisive for the outcome (Henderson and Mitchell, 2015). The same study showed that Salmond is not alone in believing the vow swayed the outcome, most yes voters do, according to the same survey. Gordon Brown supported the survey outcome stating that although it was important, it did not change the outcome of the referendum, which would have been a no anyway (Peterkin, 2015). Regarding the salience of devolution throughout campaign, in the early days of the campaign the issue was rather salient, and appeared in the news multiple times. It disappeared to the background in July, and did not become truly salient again until a short period mid-August and then again after the shock poll in early September. Appendices 6.2 - 6.4 present

various figures which display public opinion polls on the issue of devolution during the referendum campaign.

4.2.2 Scottish Government, the Yes Scotland campaign and the shadow of hierarchy

This section discusses the role of the Scottish Government in the independence referendum campaign and main developments in the Yes campaign. Both the Scottish Government and the Yes campaign had the same goal; an independent Scotland. Furthermore, Alex Salmond was First Minister in the Scottish Government and an important figure of the Yes campaign. Therefore, these are discussed in the same section. Throughout the course of the referendum campaign, the Yes campaign and Scottish Government were criticized for not being ready for a yes vote (MacNab, 2014h), for not giving clear costs and consequences of a new independent Scotland (Whitaker, 2014a; MacNab, 2014h; MacNab, 2014e; Whitaker, 2014f), for lacking figures and estimates in their White paper (Whitaker, 2014a), for not providing clear plans for issues such as currency (Maddox, 2014b; Whitaker, 2014e; Whitaker, 2014f; Peterkin, 2014h), for overestimating oil and gas revenues and other 'unrealistic' proposals (Peterkin and MacNab, 2014a; Whitaker, 2014e) and for not having any plan B's in case their preferred scenario fails (Maddox, 2014b; Whitaker 2014e; Whitaker, 2014f; Peterkin, 2014h). These criticisms are in some part natural to any campaign, but do highlight the fact that the public is likely to have been confused about the consequences of independence, as is illustrated in Appendix 6.5.

The Scottish Government consisted of the Scottish National Party, and was a single party majority government. The SNP had been in favor of an independent Scotland for many years, and pushed for the independence referendum to be held. Scottish government was in favor of an independent Scotland, and made an effort during the campaign to show in what way this independent Scotland would differ from the rest of the UK. For instance, early in the campaign, the Scottish Government suggested that if Scotland was to become independent, the pension age might not go up to 67 as is the case in the rest of the UK (MacNab, 2014d), because of the relatively lower life expectancies in Scotland. However, Scotland is, like the rest of the UK, dealing with the ageing population increasing more than the working population, which is why several MSPs claimed it was an unfunded and empty campaign promise (ibid.). Another example where Scottish Government would aim to deviate extensively from current policies in the event of independence is nuclear policy. Scottish Government planned on a nuclear ban, though it was also suggested this ban was strategic, and to be traded in for Scotland still being able to use the pound (Peterkin, 2014b). Another example is that in the event of independence, they would set up a commission that is to investigate the possibility of a new minimum wage, which would be in line with inflation (Maddox, 2014e). Essentially, this would mean an increase in wage for approximately 150.000 people (ibid.). Scottish

Government also presented a blueprint stating an independent Scotland could reach full employment (95 per cent) and with this bring an end to food banks. It planned to do so by emphasizing manufacturing and innovation (MacNab, 2014o). Finally, the Scottish Government vowed to abolish the under-occupancy rate³, although opposition stated that if they wanted to, they could get rid of it without independence also (Maddox, 2014a).

Two central issues in the campaign in which the Scottish Government has played a major part were currency and the NHS. Both of these issues are discussed in section 4.2.4, this section focuses on the particular role the Scottish Government has played regarding both issues. Regarding currency, the Scottish Government designed to set out what an independent Scotland would look like in the White paper, where they opted for a currency union with the rest of the UK. This meant that Scotland would continue to use the pound, and keep the Bank of England as its central bank. National officials however, ruled out a currency union on several occasions and called upon Scottish Government to state their plan B (Peterkin, 2014f; Whitaker, 2014e; Whitaker, 2014f; Whitaker, 2014g). Scottish Government however, refused to come up with such a plan, stating that if the rest of the UK refuses Scotland a currency union, this would mean Scotland would not be entitled to take on its share of the UK's national debt (Peterkin, 2014h). This statement led to angry responses from the other side, Chief Treasury Danny Alexander called it "the most irresponsible claim of your entire campaign" (Whitaker, 2014i). Salmond promised to provide more clarity about the issue of currency (Whitaker, 2014h), he stated to have three different plan Bs for currency in case a formal currency union would be blocked by Westminster (MacNab, 2014t). He refused however, to explain what these plans entailed, claiming the national government would not refuse Scotland a currency union, and were "bluffing" (ibid.).

The second central issue the Scottish Government has played a central part in, was the National Health Service. The NHS was at first not a major issue in the campaign, and it would not be expected to be a major issue either, as it is devolved. This means that Scottish Parliament has control over the Scottish NHS. It became a major issue in mid-August, after first being mentioned by Salmond mid-July. It became a major issue then, because the Scottish Government made it one. They stated that since Scottish Parliament cannot control the Westminster budget or Westminster decisions on privatizations, the Scottish NHS could still become a victim of "the Westminster privatization drive" (MacNab, 2014q). Salmond continued by claiming that independence was a "golden opportunity" to protect the NHS from possible privatization and budget cuts (MacNab, 2014s). Despite the fact that Better Together claimed the picture Salmond and the Yes campaign painted was incorrect, the NHS still became a central issue, and was extensively discussed during the second TV debate on 25

³ A measure that cuts the Housing Benefit of tenants if they have spare bedrooms.

August, whereas it was only mentioned once during the first debate (MacNab, 2014t). So, the Scottish Government and the Yes campaign were successful in placing the NHS in the centre of the campaign. The NHS remained an important issue during the rest of the campaign, as is discussed in section 4.2.4.

The proposals for devolution made by the national and Scottish unionist parties, made pushing for independence more difficult for the Yes campaign. Ian Blackford, a former SNP treasurer admitted this to David Torrance (2014, p.28), early on in the campaign. Scottish Government had actually aimed at adding a third option to the referendum ballot, the option of additional devolution, which David Cameron refused (ibid., p. 36-37). This made independence the only option for Scottish Government, who could not be in support of further devolution anymore, because this would mean they would support losing the referendum. In this way, devolution became an issue of the no campaign, whereas Scottish Government initially aimed at making it an issue of the Yes campaign. Salmond tried to pressure the national leaders into coming to a definite deal with a blueprint of what further powers would be, despite the fact that he also stated that the fact that devolution is now on the table destroys the no campaign's credibility, as their leaders refused to include the option on the ballot (MacNab, 2014v).

So, during the campaign the Scottish Government and the Yes campaign aimed at distancing themselves from the Westminster Government and their policies on several occasions, presenting their own view on what an independent Scotland should look like. They struggled with issues such as oil and gas revenues and currency, but were successful in placing the NHS in the centre of the debate towards the end of the campaign. It looked like their strategy was working when the Yes Scotland started to perform better in the polls.

4.2.3 Unionist parties' and the Better Together campaign

This section discusses the Better Together campaign and role the national parties played during the campaign. The reasons these are discussed in the same section are the same as they were in 4.2.2. The unionist parties; the Conservatives, Labour, Liberal Democrats and their Scottish counterparts, shared the goal of keeping the UK together, and these parties were all part of Better Together. Combining these different parties and views into one campaign proved to be difficult. As stated above, Daily Record editor Murray Foote (2015) said the Better Together campaign was an incoherent mess, even though the Daily Record was also opposed to independence and supported Better Together (Foote, 2015). There was critique from other venues as well, for example peers from the House of Lords warned the no campaign that divisions within the campaign are likely to lead to a lost campaign, and advised the Better Together campaign to focus (Maddox, 2014d). Also, during the campaign, several Labour members were reluctant to get active for Better Together, because of the

linkage with the Conservatives, these Labour members preferred the smaller Labour-driven campaigns (*Scotland on Sunday*, 2014). A final example of incoherence within the campaign was Gordon Brown, part of the Better Together campaign, stating it would be a good idea for David Cameron to debate with Alex Salmond on independence, which contradicted the campaign line (Torrance, 2014, p.37-38).

The major criticism the Better Together campaign received was having a negative campaign strategy (Macwhirter, 2014). John Reid of Better Together gave an interview early on in the campaign, stating Better Together's strategy was "emphasizing the economic advantages of being part of the UK, the risks associated with independence and thirdly, the emotional argument (which he conceded applied to both sides)" (Torrance, 2014, p.36). This strategy however, has led to the media considering Better Together as a negative campaign, mostly spreading insecurity about independence, rather than arguing why staying within the UK is the better choice (Watt, 2014; Macwhirter, 2014). This view was supported by the public, as is shown in Appendix 6.6, with the majority of people considering Better Together to be a mostly negative campaign on three separate occasions. Despite this, Better Together was still ahead in the polls for the most part. So, either their campaign strategy paid off, or people voted no in spite of Better Together's campaign strategy.

The final element discussed here, is the role national parties played during the referendum campaign. At first, it seemed the national party leaders would not get involved in the referendum campaign, as it was considered a Scottish affair. It was suggested that early on in the campaign, Cameron lobbied for international leaders to speak out against Scottish independence, with Barack Obama, the pope and Hilary Clinton, doing so among others (Peterkin and MacNab, 2014a; Peterkin, 2014g). Apart from this, the national party leaders were largely absent from the referendum debate. Whenever the national party leaders got involved in the debate, it was mostly about warning Scots about certain consequences of independence, for example border controls as a result of different immigration policies (Peterkin and MacNab, 2014b) that the SNP was not being truthful about difficult decisions that would have to be made in the event of independence (Whitaker, 2014d), or that a yes vote would actually lead to more cuts in public services, rather than less (MacNab, 2014p). Finally, it was confirmed on various occasions that all national parties would block a currency union with an independent Scotland (Whitaker, 2014g).

The national party leaders, Cameron, Miliband and Clegg, only got involved in the Scottish campaign after the shock poll of 7 September. After this, the party leaders traveled to Scotland to join the Better Together campaign by speaking at several rallies, backing Brown's timetable for new powers (though not the powers themselves) (MacNab, 2014w) and ended up negotiating the vow (Foote, 2015). Also, at the end of the campaign, Gordon Brown became more involved in the campaign again. He was very involved during the beginning, presenting a plan for more powers,

speaking at rallies and stating Cameron should debate Salmond. After this though, he disappeared in the Scotsman's coverage, suggesting he had gotten a less prominent role in the Better Together campaign. In late August however, as the polls tighten, he reappears (Peterkin, 2014i). The Scotsman suggests this is because Brown and Alistair Darling, Better Together campaign leader, did not always get along, and Darling took up a more prominent role during the campaign (ibid.). After the shock poll however, Brown was back in the front, presenting a plan and timetable for more powers (Torrance, 2014, p.155), requesting time in the House of Commons to debate further devolution for Scotland (MacNab, 2014u) and brokering the vow (Foote, 2015).

All in all, this section has set out why the Better Together campaign was considered a negative campaign. Furthermore, it became clear the national party leaders did not take a prominent role in the campaign until after the shock poll of 7 September, which is also likely to have influenced the large role of Gordon Brown towards the end of the campaign.

4.2.4 Salient issues

This final section discusses the most salient issues during the campaign. It looks what the main debate was about revolving these issues. In the analysis it is discussed whether these issues are considered as 'high' or 'low' politics following Convery's (2013) framework. These issues were selected from the broader chronological reconstruction that was made, in which they were all discussed several times, indicating they were all discussed in the Scotsman several times throughout the referendum campaign.

Economy/Business/Jobs

Economy/Business/Jobs are usually a major issue in any campaign and so it was in this one. During the campaign the discussion revolved around the consequences of independence for Scottish business and jobs, and how this would affect the Scottish economy. Regarding businesses, several options were presented, business pulling back from Scotland in case of independence, businesses that would stop or put a temporary hold on investing in Scotland in the case of independence, businesses not coming to Scotland in the case of independence, to nothing changing at all (Peterkin and Maddox, 2014; Salway, 2014d; Whitaker, 2014i; Whitaker, 2014k). Regarding jobs, the Scottish Government tried to make this a central issue, when they stated that in the event of independence, an independent Scotland could reach full employment (95 per cent), by emphasizing manufacturing and innovation (MacNab, 2014o).

Broader economic issues revolved around the SNP stating they would set up a commission to investigate the possibility of a new minimum wage in line with inflation (Maddox, 2014e). Also, the consequences of independence for the financial sector were an issue. The possible differences in

regulation on financial markets along with currency differences started to affect financial markets which suffered, after certain polls suggested an independent Scotland was a real possibility (Salway, 2014b). The possible rising of prices in Scotland after independence was discussed (Bradley, 2014). Doing business in Scotland was already more expensive than in the rest of the UK, but consumers did not suffer from this because prices are at the same level, this would however change in the event of independence (ibid.). Finally, the economy issue revolved around people being unsure what the consequences of independence would be for their personal financial lives, including their savings (Salway, 2014c).

Currency

Currency was the issue in the campaign that was probably discussed most extensively, by the media and the campaigns (MacNab, 2014n). The main question was which currency an independent Scotland would have. Major discussion arose around the Scottish Government's plan; Scotland would continue to use the British pound in a currency union. The Westminster government responded that they would refuse to enter such a currency union with an independent Scotland. The campaign continued with Better Together calling for the Yes campaign to come up with other options for the currency problem, and the Yes campaign calling the national government's bluff, stating the national government would not refuse Scotland a currency union, because then there would be no reason for Scotland to take up its share of the UK's debt. Sterlingisation was discussed, in which case Scotland would continue to use the pound without formal links, leaving them without a central bank (MacNab, 2014m). Salmond ruled out the Euro, as it would pose too many transaction costs on trade with England (Peterkin, 2014h).

All in all, the Scotsman stated that the discussion in the campaign barely moved beyond currency (MacNab, 2014n), undermining other important issues such as pensions. On 18 September, the Yes and No campaigns were still in an impasse on currency, both holding on to their standpoints, which meant voters had no idea what the Scottish currency would be in the event of independence.

Oil

The next issue is Scotland's oil and gas revenues. Scotland's oil is an important natural resource and source of income. Scottish Government first calculated what the revenues would be for an independent Scotland in the White paper, in order to calculate budgets. The main discussion arising from this issue, was the fact that early on in the campaign, the Scottish Government itself released papers in which revenue estimates deviated from how much revenue there would be; a 2 billion pound difference (Peterkin, 2014e). Salmond defended the highest estimate, though the lower estimate had been made by one of Salmond's own economic advisors (ibid.). These differences in

estimates could influence Scotland's budgets for years to come, making it an important issue. After this, the issue revolved around making estimates on revenues from Scottish government, Westminster Government and experts. Some estimates supported the Scottish Governments' lowest estimates made in the White paper, other did not and suggested the Scottish Governments' estimates were 45 to 60 per cent too high (Whitaker, 2014d; MacNab and Bradley, 2014). Moreover, a publication of official figures on the North Sea oil revenues of 13 August revealed the revenues had fallen by 1.5 billion pounds from the estimated figures. These revenues were also much lower than the White paper has estimated in their plans for independence (Peterkin and McNab, 2014c).

So, at the end of the campaign, it was somewhat clear that the estimates made in the White paper on oil and gas revenues were too high. Salmon however, kept insisting that either way, an independent Scotland would be a wealthy country due to its oil, stating that even the lower estimates made by experts would still be worth 1 trillion pounds of revenues for Scotland (MacNab, 2014t).

NHS

The National Health Service was, as stated above, not a central issue until very late in the campaign, and only became one due to the efforts of the Scottish Government. In mid-July, Salmond first mentioned that if Scotland would remain within the UK, the NHS would not be safe from privatization and budget cuts (MacNab, 2014l). After this statement, the NHS became a campaign issue, with Better Together responding that the Scottish NHS was already devolved; therefore, Westminster had no control over it. However, Salmond stated Westminster defines the Scottish budgets, which means the NHS is still vulnerable to privatization and cuts. It became a central issue during the second TV debate (MacNab, 2014q; MacNab, 2014s; MacNab, 2014t). In the end, the vow discussed the issue of the NHS, stating that the national party leaders guaranteed the Scottish Parliament would have the power to keep the Scottish NHS in public hands if they wished to, and they would also have the power to make final decisions on the NHS and other public service spending (Clegg, 2014).

Pensions

Pensions were not as salient and extensively discussed as the other issues. Pensions are a reserved matter, and the question was whether UK pensions would remain in the case of independence (Salway, 2014a). The reason why this issue probably did not become as salient, was because Scottish Government had already guaranteed in their White Paper that the level of current UK state pensions would be met in the event of independence, which was confirmed again during the campaign

(Whitaker, 2014j). The Better Together campaign was not able to successfully challenge this statement, though some discussion did arise when Scottish Government promised to review the pension age going up to 67, which was discussed in section 4.2.2.

NATO/Defense

The issue of the NATO and Scottish defense was discussed extensively during the campaign. The question was whether, and if so how fast, an independent Scotland would be able to join NATO. As part of the UK, Scotland was already a NATO member holding nuclear weapons also (MacNab, 2014b). Early in the campaign however, Scotland expressed reluctance to have nuclear weapons as an independent state, even going so far as to state there would be a nuclear ban in an independent Scotland (ibid.). It was suggested this stance was strategic, and Scotland would give it up in exchange for a currency union (Peterkin, 2014b), though this remains a suggestion.

There was also the question whether an independent Scotland would lead to security threats for the entire UK, as they would have different defense and security policies. According to a former Royal Navy Chief, an independent Scotland refused by NATO would indeed pose a threat to the entire UK (MacNab, 2014b). In fact, the defense policy set out in the White Paper was criticized for being "dangerous ... amateurish, unrealistic and lacking clear strategic purpose" by General Sir Richard Shirreff (Peterkin, 2014d). As General, he also warned it would be unlikely for Scotland to receive fast NATO membership, because of the current membership situations with Ukraine and Georgia (ibid.). This issue remained one until polling day, with voters being unsure about the consequences of independence for NATO membership and security in general.

EU

The main issue revolving the European Union was not whether an independent Scotland should become a member, even though the central issue in the UK is whether or not they should leave the EU. The White paper already stated that an independent Scotland would apply for EU membership. The question was however, if Scotland would already be a member if they were to become independent, and if not, how fast they would gain membership. There was a short row after new EU Commission President Juncker ruled out further EU expansions over the next 5 years. Various Better Together campaigners took this speech and claimed it was proof that Scotland would not be able to become part of the EU upon independence. However, it was later confirmed that Juncker was not talking about Scotland, as Scotland is a different situation already having been a member as part of the UK (MacNab, 2014k). However, it still remained unclear how long it would take for an independent Scotland to join, and there were still indications that Belgium and Spain might want to

block a fast Scottish membership, because of their problems with their own secessionist regions (Maddox, 2014f).

A few days before the referendum, Alex Salmond revealed that talks were going on between Scotland and some major EU member states including France, Spain and Italy "about the prospect of an independent Scotland joining the EU" (MacNab, 2014x). It was said that actions and negotiations to join the EU would start immediately in the event of a yes vote. Salmond stated that Scotland would remain an EU member if it is to become independent, and will only have to renegotiate their position, which he expects could be completed within 18 months, when Scotland would actually become independent. Better Together however, kept its position that an independent Scotland would be out of the EU at first, going through the membership application process first (ibid.). So, on the issue of the EU, on ballot day people remained unsure of the consequences of independence on the EU membership, though it was clear that an independent Scotland would eventually become a member.

5. Analysis following the theoretical framework

This chapter discusses each hypothesis formulated in the theoretical framework, analyze data from the 2014 independence referendum case and confirm or reject the hypotheses. By analyzing data

and confirming or rejecting the hypotheses, the aim is to answer the research questions of this thesis in the next and final chapter. An overview of the theoretical framework was presented in 2.5. This section discusses the hypotheses of each theoretical approach in turn and provides an analysis of data and relevant information about the case from the reconstruction, which was constructed using newspaper articles about the referendum from the Scotsman published during the campaign period.

5.1 Mazzoleni's competitive and institutional logic

As formulated in the Theoretical chapter, the hypotheses formulated for Mazzoleni's theoretical approach are:

H1: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will pay attention to devolution during the referendum campaign

H2a: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will be willing to make concrete promises on further devolution

H2b: If the three main parties make concrete promises on devolution, these promises will fit their competitive advantage

This section discusses the relevant information to each hypothesis in turn, before looking at every hypothesis to see whether it can be accepted or has to be rejected.

First, regarding the attention of the three main parties to devolution, before the campaign the Westminster government consisting of the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats, aimed at keeping devolution out of the referendum by opting for a binary question of independence, rather than adding an additional option for further devolution. This can be seen as serving their competitive advantage, because, according to a survey, most Scots backed further devolution, but did not back independence (MacNab, 2014a). By not including further devolution on the ballot, the parties would not be forced to further devolve powers as a result of the referendum, as is in their competitive advantage, since neither of these two parties does particularly well in Scottish politics and elections. The Scottish Conservatives have 15 out of 128 seats in Scottish Parliament, and the Liberal Democrats 5 (the Scottish Parliament, 2015).

There was attention for devolution early on from the Scottish unionist parties. Before the campaign started all parties presented plans on what further devolution should entail, and early in the campaign, they all signed a pledge declaring themselves as supporters of devolution. However, this pledge of being supporters of devolution did not oblige these Scottish party leaders to anything more than supporting further devolution, it did not tie them to actually designing further devolution. In fact, designing further devolution is not even in the hands of the Scottish Parliament, they have no authority to do so. So, this attention for devolution, though designed by the Scottish unionist parties themselves, did serve their competitive interest, as it did not oblige them to take any specific

measures, and it can be seen as an example of positive rather than negative campaigning. The no campaign Better Together was considered a negative campaign very early on (Macwhirter, 2014), and switching the attention to devolution could lead to them being perceived as less negative.

The national party leaders signed the same declaration the Scottish leaders signed, but then in early August. Since it was the same declaration, it did not oblige the national party leaders to do anything except support further devolution, hence signing this pledge was in their competitive advantage as it had also been for the Scottish party leaders. In fact, as mentioned in the reconstruction, the three unionist parties did not plan to come to any deal on concrete devolution measures during the campaign (MacNab, 2014i). The national party leaders did not pay any further attention to further devolution, except stating that there would be further devolution in the event of a no vote, until the vow. Furthermore, the reconstruction also set out that the three parties were not all on the same page when it came to devolution, or whether a deal with concrete devolution measures should be struck (Brown, 2014). The vow was the only time during the campaign when the national party leaders committed to giving further powers and made some minor promises on what these powers would be. It is argued here that the vow was in the competitive advantage of the national party leaders as well, because after the shock poll, it appeared that there could be a majority of Scots in favor of independence. As the three parties aimed at keeping the UK together, combined with the positive attitude of Scots towards further devolution, it was in the competitive advantage of the three main parties to pay attention to further devolution by signing the vow. Hence, devolution was not treated as an intrinsically important issue during the campaign by the unionist parties, but as a tool that could be employed in order to benefit their electoral gain.

Therefore, regarding *H1: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will pay attention to devolution during the referendum campaign* it is concluded that this hypothesis is confirmed for the case of the independence referendum. The three main parties have not paid attention to devolution during the campaign, unless it was in their competitive advantage.

Further devolution in general would not be in the competitive advantage of any of the unionist parties, because the three parties would all have to let power go from Westminster to Scotland, the latter being ruled by the SNP. Furthermore, Better Together had the majority for a no vote for a long time throughout the campaign. So, what changed? As mentioned in the reconstruction, it seemed a switch was made after the shock poll, which was the first poll to put the yes camp ahead. Before the shock poll, the parties had to choose between promising further devolution, and not doing so. After the shock poll, the option of independence became a more realistic one, making it a choice between not promising further powers with the possibility of losing Scotland as a result, and promising further powers more specifically making an independent Scotland less likely, as there was always a majority in favor of further devolution (MacNab, 2014a).

Hence, the three parties were not willing to make concrete promises on further devolution throughout the campaign, until it was in their competitive advantage, occurring after the shock poll. After this, it seemed as if an independent Scotland was in fact a realistic option, the outcome none of the unionist parties wanted. Therefore, at this point their competitive advantage shifted from not promising powers and keeping the UK together, to promising more powers in order to keep the UK together. So, it is argued here that regarding *H2a: If it is in their competitive advantage, then the three main parties will be willing to make concrete promises on further devolution* it can be confirmed that the parties did not make any concrete promises on devolution until it was in their competitive advantage.

Third, the type of promises made by the three main parties in the vow, are considered as well. The vow made three main promises; the first was new powers for Scottish Parliament. These were specified by saying Holyrood⁴ would receive "extensive new powers" and it was stated that Scottish Parliament would become a permanent part of the UK Constitution (Clegg, 2014). This, though it is more concrete than previous promises, still remains rather vague. Second, a promise of fairness to Scotland was made, the vow guaranteed UK funding of pensions and healthcare and stated that Scotland would continue to share in the UK's resources for defense, prosperity and welfare. Again, with the exception of the guarantee for UK funding, it was a rather vague promise. Third, the vow guaranteed that Scottish Parliament would have the right to spend more on the NHS, if the people wanted to do so. It promised to continue the Barnett allocation⁵, and to leave the final decisions on the NHS with the Scottish people. Also, they promised Scottish Parliament could keep the Scottish NHS in public hands if they wished to do so.

So, promises were made for "extensive new powers" (ibid.), but what these powers entail exactly was still not made entirely clear. In fact, the vow could be considered less than a lowest common denominator, as all other proposals put forward by each party separately, recognized that Scotland should get additional tax raising, revenue increasing and housing benefit powers. So, even though all three parties agreed on these measures separately, they chose not to include these in the vow. It could be asked how they were able to exclude these plans, would Scots not demand at least what they had already agreed on separately? It is likely the party leaders got away with staying clear from promising these new tax raising, revenue increasing and housing benefit powers, because a vast majority of Scots was unaware of what each party had offered individually before the start of the campaign. A poll from late June showed this, when almost 75 per cent of Scots were unaware of any plans made by the three main parties, which is shown in Appendix 6.1.

⁴ How Scottish Parliament is addressed, after its proximity to Holyrood Palace

⁵ Formula by which public service spending is determined for Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales to adjust for changes in England. The Barnett allocation benefits Scotland more than the other UK regions (BBC, 30 October 2014).

Furthermore, the issue that is the main focus of the vow is the NHS. The NHS was already a devolved issue, which means Scottish Parliament already has power over the Scottish NHS, and apart from guaranteeing already existing powers, the vow did not promise any new powers regarding NHS. So why did it have such a prominent role? As explained in the reconstruction, the NHS had gained prominence as a central issue in the late stages of the campaign, due to efforts of the yes campaign, arguing the NHS would not be safe from cuts and privatization in the event of a no vote. The NHS was used by the yes campaign to back the national parties into a corner, which the national parties responded to in the vow, after having already stated in the media that the NHS would be save. So, this way the NHS became a central issue of the vow, despite the fact that no new promises were made regarding the NHS.

Thus, to conclude this section, the final hypothesis derived from Mazzoleni (2009) *H2b: If the three main parties make concrete promises on devolution, these promises will fit their competitive advantage* is confirmed for the case of the independence referendum. The three main parties made some concrete promises on devolution, though they still remained rather vague, and the promises were less than a common denominator. However, the promises they made did fit their competitive advantage. Making the promise to make Scottish Parliament irreversible was inevitable, since Scots value Scottish Parliament higher than Westminster Parliament (the Scottish Government, 2014). The new powers that were promised were not specified, the guarantee of UK funding of pensions and healthcare was a mere reinforcement of the status quo, as were the promises made on the Barnett allocation and the NHS. So, the promises that were made were largely reinforcing the status quo (apart from Scottish Parliament's constitutional status), which exactly fit the preferences of the three main parties. According to political and institutional logic, the national parties want Scotland to remain within the UK, without giving them too many additional powers, which is exactly what the vow promised.

5.2 Spina's government determinants

Spina's (2013) approach links to Mazzoleni (2009) as they both search for what leads to and determines decentralization or devolution processes. However, where Mazzoleni (ibid.) theorizes devolution links to competitive logic and institutional status quo, Spina (2013) argues these processes follow from powerful, stable governments and the presence of a strong regional party. The hypothesis that follows from Spina (ibid.) states:

H3: If the Westminster Government is stable, powerful and there is a presence of a strong regionalist party, this is more likely to lead to devolution

Spina's (ibid.) government determinants were applied to the case of the independence referendum, analyze whether the Coalition government was indeed more stable and powerful than

previous governments, which did not decide on further devolution. As stated in the method chapter, the Westminster governments between 1997 and 2010 were all scored on the Banzhaf power index which is used by Spina (ibid.), and is shown in Appendix 7. Then, the presence of the SNP as the main Scottish regionalist party in the House of Commons was measured, in order to see whether there was indeed the presence of a regionalist party, which was stronger now than it was in the past.

First, looking at the determinant of the stable and powerful government, as it turns out, from the governments between 1997 and 2010 the most unstable and least powerful government has moved towards further devolution, which was the Coalition government. However, all other governments were considered equally strong in the index with a score of 1 as a single majority government, up until the 1997 government. This government had the largest majority and was the first government to decide upon devolution. So, the Government elected in 2010, which decided upon further decentralizing power after the Scottish Independence referendum would, according to Spina (ibid.), be the least stable government of the last four governments. So, the 1997 devolution would fit into Spina's (ibid.) view, whereas the 2014 decision to devolve would not. 2010 is the only period where alternative majority governments are possible, how likely this is however, considering British political culture, is another matter.

The second determinant Spina (ibid.) includes is the presence of a strong regionalist party in the national legislature. Even though the SNP is the dominant party in Scotland, it is less present in the national legislature. Spina (ibid.) expects that higher percentages of regionalist parties in the national legislature increase the likelihood of governments enacting decentralization or devolution. What becomes clear from the number of seats the SNP obtained in the House of Commons (the national legislature), in 2010 they were back to their 1997 number, 6 seats, after having lost a seat in both the 2001 and 2005 general elections. However, the SNP had spectacularly grown since 2003 in Scotland, being part of the Scottish executive in 2007 and holding a majority of seats in Scottish Parliament in 2011. The latter is extraordinary, considering the way this parliament is elected, a mix of first-past-the-post and representative voting. Still, with 6 out of 646 seats in the national legislature and a total of 59 seats in Scotland, it is difficult to identify the SNP as a strong regionalist party by Spina's (ibid.) measures, since they only received 10 per cent of the Scottish seats in the national parliament. In almost any other measure of regionalist strength, the SNP is likely to do better. For instance when looking at their results in Scottish elections, at their history and growth or by measuring their presence in the media. It is the way Spina (ibid.) measures the presence of a strong regionalist party, by looking at their presence in the national legislature, that they are not defined here a strong regionalist party.

Therefore, the hypothesis derived from Spina (ibid.) *H3: If the Westminster Government is stable, powerful and there is a presence of a strong regionalist party, this is more likely to lead to*

devolution is rejected for the case of the independence referendum. The reason for this is that the government that decided upon further devolution was the weakest government since the first government that implemented devolution to Scotland, and because there is no presence of a strong regionalist party in the national legislature as is expected in the hypothesis.

5.3 Toubeau and Wagner's economic and cultural trade-off

Toubeau and Wagner's (2013) approach was included in the theoretical framework to account for the role ideology plays in determining support for devolution or decentralization. The ideology variable was included in Spina (2013) but he found that it was not significant. Toubeau and Wagner (2013) however, came to different results, measuring ideology differently. The hypothesis that was derived from this approach states

H4: If a party has only economic or cultural reasons for supporting devolution, they have made a trade-off on one of these dimensions in order to support devolution, which makes them less inclined to make promises in the vow

What economically right and culturally conservative is, was set out in the theoretical chapter, and operationalized in the methods chapter. This section analyzes the party manifestos of the national parties for the 2010 elections and the Scottish parties' manifestos for the 2011 Scottish elections. These two elections were the most recent elections at the time of the referendum. By analyzing what parties say in their party manifestos, their support for devolution and their reasons for this are derived.

First, the party manifestos of the 2010 general elections from the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the SNP are analyzed, and then the party manifestos of the 2011 Scottish elections from the Scottish Conservatives, Scottish Labour, the Scottish Liberal Democrats and the SNP are analyzed (appendix 5). The 2010 general election party manifesto from the Conservatives state that they support devolution (the Conservatives, 2010). It is slightly difficult to identify cultural or economic reasons for this. However, because the Conservatives are negative about what devolution has brought in their manifesto, resurgence in nationalism (*ibid.*, p.83), their reasons are not considered as cultural. Furthermore, they are focused on extending devolution in an economic way, with tax raising powers for Scotland (*ibid.*), which is why their reasons for supporting devolution are identified here as economic. This means that the Conservatives have made a trade-off on the cultural dimension, not supporting devolution as culturally and intrinsically valuable, but more as an efficient tool.

The 2010 general election party manifesto from Labour states that they support devolution. The manifesto refers to devolution as providing a fairer partnership between the countries in the UK, which means an important reason for their support for devolution can be identified as cultural

(Labour, 2010, p.9:5). However, Labour also mentions concrete new powers for Scotland, in the field of tax, that are economical. The devolution of new economic powers serves as the reason for also seeing Labour as having economic reasons for supporting devolution. Therefore, Labour here is identified here as having both economical and cultural reasons for devolution. Therefore, no trade-off on devolution has been made. Labour supports devolution for cultural reasons, seeing devolution as intrinsically valuable, and for economic reasons, seeing devolution as a way to more efficiently ruling the country.

The 2010 general elections manifesto from the Liberal Democrats states that they are committed to create a federal Britain (Liberal Democrats, 2010). For this manifesto, decentralization was used as an additional search term, because this is the terminology used by the Liberal Democrats, rather than devolution, which is central in the other party manifestos. The Liberal Democrats are committed to creating a federal Britain, with more powers for local authorities, because they believe this will lead to a better state (ibid., p.92-93). Hence, there are clear cultural reasons for the Liberal Democrats to support devolution, because it has to lead to the federal state they believe in. Furthermore, there are also clear economic reasons, with the Liberal Democrats also actively supporting economic powers such as tax powers being devolved to lower levels (ibid.). The Liberal Democrats also want to replace the Barnett Formula with another mechanism of dividing state funds, whereas in the vow they supported the Barnett Formula to remain in place. The Barnett Formula is the formula by which the level of public spending for Scotland and Wales is determined (BBC, 2014). The Liberal Democrats are considered here as having both economic and cultural reasons for supporting devolution, which is why they did not have to make a trade-off between the economic and cultural dimension.

Finally, regarding the 2010 general election party manifestos, the SNP stated to support devolution also, though only as a second best option, preferring independence for Scotland, rather than more devolution (Scottish National Party, 2010, p.17). Their reasons for supporting devolution are economic, the SNP believes Scotland would be better equipped in dealing with economic pressures and have more hold over their public finances (ibid.). At the same time there is a clear cultural component believing Scottish people should decide over Scottish matters and politics, though with the SNP the cultural dimension is tied much more to independence, rather than devolution. Still, the SNP is identified here as having both economic and cultural reasons for supporting devolution, which is why they did not have to make a trade-off between the economic and cultural dimension.

Second, the party manifestos from the 2011 Scottish elections are analyzed, and the first remark that has to be made, is that these parties were more unclear about devolution than the national parties were. First, it does not become clear from the 2011 Scottish elections party

manifesto from the Scottish Conservatives whether they oppose or support (further) devolution. The manifesto does not explicitly state that Scottish Conservatives support devolution. The only support for devolution (or rather what it has brought: the Scottish Parliament) that can be derived from the party manifesto is the Conservatives' aim to protect the devolved international aid budget (Scottish Conservatives, 2011, p.28). It would be somewhat strange for this, or any of the Scottish parties to be opposed to devolution, considering the fact that devolution has given them existence. However, the Scottish Conservatives are skeptical about the consequences for business from devolution (ibid., p.3). Furthermore, since the Scottish brand pays no attention to any cultural reasons for supporting devolution, they are identified here as having economic reasons for supporting devolution (as they refer to the budget and business), but no cultural reasons, which is the same for the Conservatives. Hence, the Scottish Conservatives also made a trade-off on the cultural dimension.

Scottish Labour is, in their 2011 Scottish elections party manifesto, in favor of further devolution in several areas and is supporter of the idea of greater accountability in Scottish Parliament for its spending priorities, as its national equivalent is as well. They are in favor of devolving more powers in areas such as capital borrowing powers, new tax powers and setting the drink-drive and speed limit in Scotland (Scottish Labour, 2011, p.17). It is somewhat difficult to get behind the reasons of Scottish Labour to support these new powers from the manifesto itself. However, these powers were all recommendations made by the Calman commission, a commission formed to look into further devolution to Scotland by the last Labour Government, which the national parties stated they supported in the 2010 general election manifestos. This would mean that Scottish Labour would support this devolution because of national Labour's stance, and national Labour has both economic and cultural reasons. Therefore, the same applies for Scottish Labour as for Labour, no trade-off had to be made. Regarding the Scottish Liberal Democrats, devolution in the context of national to Scotland is not mentioned in their 2011 Scottish elections party manifesto, therefore from this manifesto cannot be concluded how their reasons for opposing or supporting devolution can be identified.

The SNP clearly supports (further) devolution in their 2011 Scottish elections manifesto, though they would prefer independence, which is stated clearly in the manifesto as well (Scottish National Party, 2011, p.42). Their reasons for supporting devolution are both economic, they state Scotland would do better economically with additional powers and responsibility, as well as cultural. The manifest looks back at the opening of the Scottish Parliament in 1999: "it fell to an emotional Winnie Ewing – more than three decades after her first electoral success – to open the Parliament with the words, the Scottish Parliament, adjourned on the 25th day of March of 1707, is hereby reconvened" (ibid., p.42-43). They also describe devolution as a way to stand up for Scotland's interests, which is another aspect of devolution that is more cultural than economical. It is concluded

here that the SNP has both cultural and economical reasons for supporting devolution, which is why they did not have to make a trade-off between the economic and cultural dimension.

Hence, regarding *H4: If a party has only economic or cultural reasons for supporting devolution, they have made a trade-off on one of these dimensions in order to support devolution, which makes them less inclined to make promises in the vow*, it has to be concluded that this hypothesis cannot be confirmed nor rejected. What has become clear from the analysis, is that the Conservatives were the only party to have made a trade-off between the economic and cultural dimension, since they are not historical or ideological supporters of devolution (Deacon, 2012). However, from the reconstruction was not possible to identify which parties were more or less inclined to make promises for more powers in the vow. The dynamics at play there remain hidden for now. Therefore, it is currently not possible to reject or confirm this hypothesis.

5.4 Swenden and McEwen's shadow of hierarchy

As formulated in the theoretical chapter, the hypotheses derived from Swenden and McEwen (2014) are:

H5a: If the shadow of hierarchy is less present during the referendum campaign, then Scottish Government will present themselves as holding more autonomy, making concrete plans post-independence

H5b: If Scottish Government presents themselves as holding more autonomy, then it is likely there will be more pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence.

As argued in the theoretical section, Swenden and McEwen (ibid.) argue that there is a shadow of hierarchy present in the UK, because of their institutional structure, where the national government has the upper hand. This was confirmed by an analysis performed on the 2010 general elections party manifestos, which can be seen in Appendix 5. The main differences that were analyzed are those between the Conservatives 2010 manifesto (as this was the dominant national party) and the SNP's 2011 manifesto. The SNP manifesto refers quite a few times to the Conservatives, more often than to the referendum, though not as often as they refer to devolution. Also, the references towards the Conservatives, are of a negative tone and are aimed at the national, rather than the Scottish Conservatives. This indicates the presence of a shadow of hierarchy and party incongruence with the regional party (the SNP) clearly distancing itself from the national party (the Conservatives).

It is argued here that in the case of the independence referendum, this was less present, because the outcome of the referendum could have led to the shadow disappearing altogether, which would have happened in the event of independence. If the shadow of hierarchy was indeed absent, this would influence behavior on both sides of the campaigns, opening up opportunities for

the advocates of independence, and changing the status quo for unionists. This change in relations from the status quo, could help explain the vow. Furthermore, a referendum campaign can be compared to an election campaign, in which case the shadow of hierarchy always tends to be less present, because parties do not act as state officials around these periods (ibid.).

First, as was set out in the reconstruction, during the referendum campaign Scottish government was very active in making and presenting post-independence plans. They specifically made promises on what they would do in the event of independence, they could not make and fulfill these in their current constitutional status. A short recap of some of their promises throughout the independence campaign: reconsider the pension age going up to 67, consider a higher minimum wage, a nuclear ban, getting rid of the under-occupancy rate and ending food banks by reaching full employment. Scottish government would need independence in order to create policy as a means to reach these ends. So, this can be interpreted as a clear sign that Scottish government was indeed presenting themselves as already holding more autonomy.

Another element in the campaign that can be interpreted similarly, is the issue of the NHS. The NHS is a devolved issue, and was therefore initially not a part of the campaign, because the outcome of the referendum would presumably not change much. Scottish government however, decided upon making the NHS an issue in the campaign, by using the NHS to emphasize what they were not able to do in their current status (protect the NHS from privatization), thereby arguing why they needed to become independent. This strategy was, at the same time, an attack on national government, accusing them of wanting to privatize the NHS, and an opportunity for Scottish government to show their limits in their current power status. It is argued here that this strategy can be considered as Scottish government presenting themselves as holding more autonomy, by acknowledging their current limits and aiming to release themselves from these limits.

Hence, during the referendum campaign, Scottish government attempted to simultaneously act with more autonomy, by making promises post-independence for which independence was necessary, and acknowledged their current limits by linking these to an issue important to the Scottish electorate, the NHS, in order to attempt to convince the electorate that independence was necessary. Hence, regarding *H5a: If the shadow of hierarchy is less present during the referendum campaign, then Scottish Government will present themselves as holding more autonomy, making plans post-independence* it can be concluded from the behavior of Scottish government, that the shadow of hierarchy was indeed less present during the referendum campaign. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed for the case of the independence referendum.

Now that it has been argued that Scottish government presented themselves as holding more autonomy during the referendum campaign, it is now considered whether this is what pressured the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence, which is stated in

hypothesis 5b. It has already been argued that there was pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence. Their alternative started out as presenting themselves as supporters of devolution, rather than making any concrete promises for more powers, and ended up in the vow. Now however, it is a difficult task to establish what actually put pressure on the party leaders. Was it only the shock poll, which was set out earlier, or can it be argued that the behavior of Scottish government influenced their behavior also?

Regarding the promises Scottish government made, most of these are not very likely to have influenced the main party leader's behavior, or put significant pressure on them, because every promise that was made, was often countered by national government officials stating these promises painted an overly optimistic picture, and that most of these would not be within reach. This was the main critique on Scottish government during the campaign, as was set out in the previous chapter. Since these promises are considered here as overreaching and (slightly) unrealistic, it is concluded here those promises did not put additional pressure on the party leaders to come up with the vow.

However, there is one aspect of Scottish government's behavior that is likely to have put additional pressure on the party leaders, beside the polls, which is the issue of the NHS. The issue of the NHS was discussed in the reconstruction, it got a lot of attention towards the end of the campaign, when Scottish government convincingly argued that independence was needed in order to protect the NHS. This issue was the only major development towards the end of the campaign, with a lot of other important issues not showing any development, and still revolving around the same arguments. During this stage, the polls starting changing as well, reporting a closing gap between yes and no, some even putting yes ahead. Considering the fact that the other main issues of the campaign remained constant, apart from the NHS, and the fact that there were no other major new developments that could have led to a switch in the polls, it is argued here that the NHS issue is likely to have played an important role in the changing of the polls, which eventually led to the vow.

Another sign that there was indeed pressure on the main party leaders to come up with the vow, can be seen in the fact that the idea from the vow came from the Daily Record editor Murray Foote. The Daily Record and with Gordon Brown were the driving factors behind getting the party leaders together to come up with a pledge for more powers for Scotland in the event of a no vote. However, as explained in the reconstruction chapter, according to Foote, this pressure was not so much the result of the behavior of the Scottish Government, but rather a result of the polls in combination with an incoherent strategy of the no campaign.

Hence, *H5b: If Scottish Government presents themselves as holding more autonomy, then it is likely there will be more pressure on the main party leaders to provide an alternative to independence* cannot be fully confirmed nor rejected for the case of the 2014 independence referendum. It was probably not the case that Scottish government's behavior directly influenced the main party leaders

to present further devolution plans. However, there was probably an indirect influence present, with the behavior of Scottish government in the late stage of the campaign with the NHS, which influenced the polls and in turn influenced the main party leaders' behavior. So, the result was that Scottish government presented themselves with more autonomy and simultaneously argued why they needed independence by using the NHS, which probably altered part of the public's opinion and was reflected in the polls, leading to the three main party leaders brokering the vow. This mechanism was explained in section 5.1. That the pressure was indeed there, shows from the fact that the idea of the vow came from the Daily Record, not from the party leaders themselves.

5.5 Libbrecht *et al* SWP stances on regional issues

The hypotheses derived from Libbrecht *et al* (2011) state the following:

H6a: If Scottish Parties have deviated from national standpoints on devolution in the past, it is more likely they will do so during the referendum

H6b: If the referendum is considered a regional issue, then Scottish Parties could, though not necessarily will deviate from national standpoints on devolution

H7: If the referendum is considered a national issue, the national parties determine the party line on devolution, and this line will be backed by the Scottish parties

These hypotheses are discussed in turn. The data used to confirm or reject the hypotheses comes from the reconstruction, newspaper hits on referendum and party manifestos. This approach is linked to Swenden and McEwen's (2014) shadow of hierarchy, because the latter could account for Scottish parties not deriving from national standpoints on devolution.

This section analyzes party programs from the 2010 general elections and the 2011 Scottish elections for H6a. The coding can be found in Appendix 5. When it comes to the topic of devolution, the national parties in the 2010 manifestos have all referred to the recommendations on devolution made by the Calman Commission. This Commission therefore is placed in context, before this section continues. The Calman Commission was set up in 2008 by the Labour government, to look at Scottish Devolution. They published two reports, from which the latter, published in 2009, makes recommendations on additional powers for Scotland. The three main parties all refer to the Commission's recommendations in their 2010 general election party manifestos, stating they agree with recommendations that were made. Some of these recommendations were added to the Scotland Bill, which resulted in the 2012 Scotland Act, and gave Scottish Parliament additional powers. In the 2011 Scottish elections party manifestos however, devolution was a non-issue, it was hardly referred to at all.

What has become clear from the national 2010 party manifestos and the 2011 party manifestos is that none of the parties have contradicted themselves on the topic of devolution.

Hence, the Scottish parties did not deviate from the national party line on devolution. All national parties used the Calman Commission report on devolution, and stated it would follow its recommendations. The Scottish Conservatives did not refer to either the Calman Commission (where their national counterpart did), or the new powers that would be gained from the Scotland Bill/Act. Scottish Labour did refer to several additional powers which had been recommended by the Calman Commission. Furthermore, none of the Scottish counterparts of the unionist parties aimed at further devolution beyond the Scotland Bill, though they do support devolution in general. Most importantly however, none of the Scottish parties deviated from the national parties' line of devolution in the 2011 Scottish elections party manifestos, for example by pressing for further devolution beyond the Scotland Act.

Hence, regarding the first hypothesis derived from Libbrecht *et al* (ibid.) which stated *H7a: If Scottish Parties have deviate from national standpoints on devolution in the past, it is more likely they will do so during the referendum* it can be concluded that on the most recent occasion where the Scottish parties were able to deviate from their national party line, as the Scottish elections are a clear regional setting, they have not done so. Therefore the hypothesis cannot be rejected, nor confirmed. Scottish parties did not deviate from the national party line on devolution during the most recent regional Scottish elections, when they are able to do so according to Libbrecht *et al* (ibid.). Because it is a regional setting, it is not more likely the Scottish parties deviate from the national party line on devolution during the referendum. Therefore it cannot be confirmed. However it also cannot be rejected because this thesis only analyzed the most recent occasion where the Scottish parties could have deviated. They might have done so in the past, which is why this hypothesis cannot be rejected either.

For H7b it has to be determined whether the referendum is considered a national or a regional issue. In order to determine this, an overview was set up of hits on the referendum in quality newspapers. The Herald was used as the Scottish newspaper and first an overview was created with the Independent and Independent on Sunday as the national newspaper. This gave the following overview:

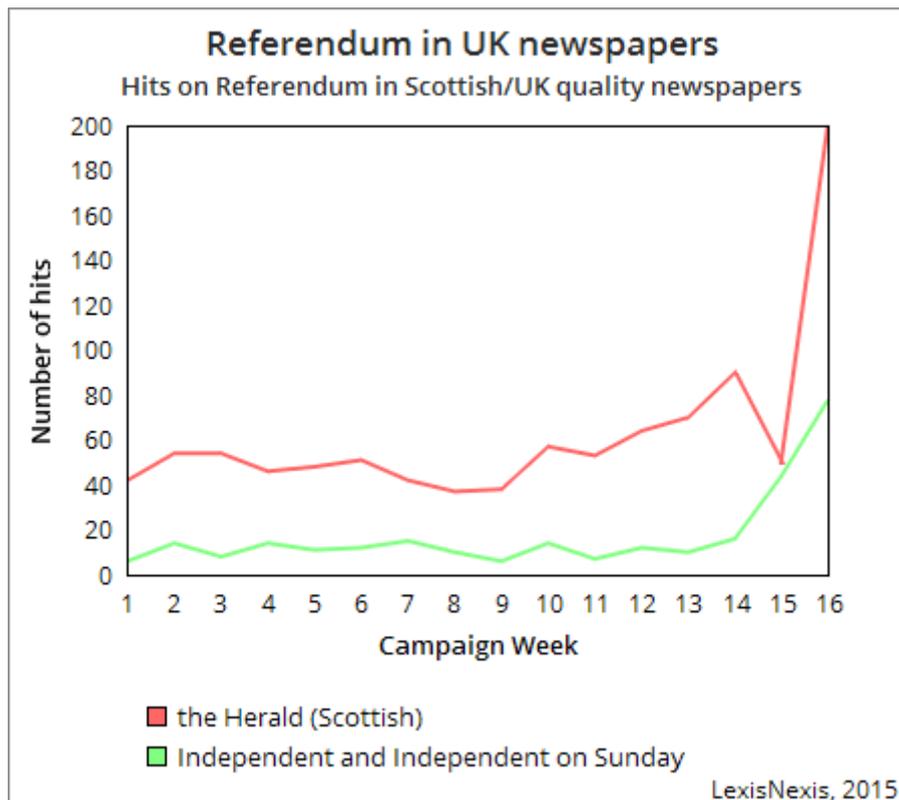


Figure 5.1: Overview of referendum subject hits in the Herald and Independent

The graph presents the number of hits on the term referendum in a regional quality and national quality newspaper, to determine whether the issue can be considered more of a regional issue (with not a lot of coverage in the national newspaper) or a national issue, where the issue coverage does not differ too much between the national and regional newspaper. Figure 5.1 suggests that up until week 14, the referendum was mostly a regional issue, with coverage in the Independent and the Independent on Sunday barely reaching above 20 hits per week. From this it could be concluded that the Scottish parties could set their own line on devolution during the referendum, as Libbrecht *et al* (ibid.) theorize. However, an additional test was executed, by adding another national quality newspaper, the Daily Telegraph and the Sunday Telegraph, to see whether coverage on the referendum was somewhat equal for these national quality newspapers. The overview that includes the Daily Telegraph and the Sunday Telegraph is shown in figure 5.2.

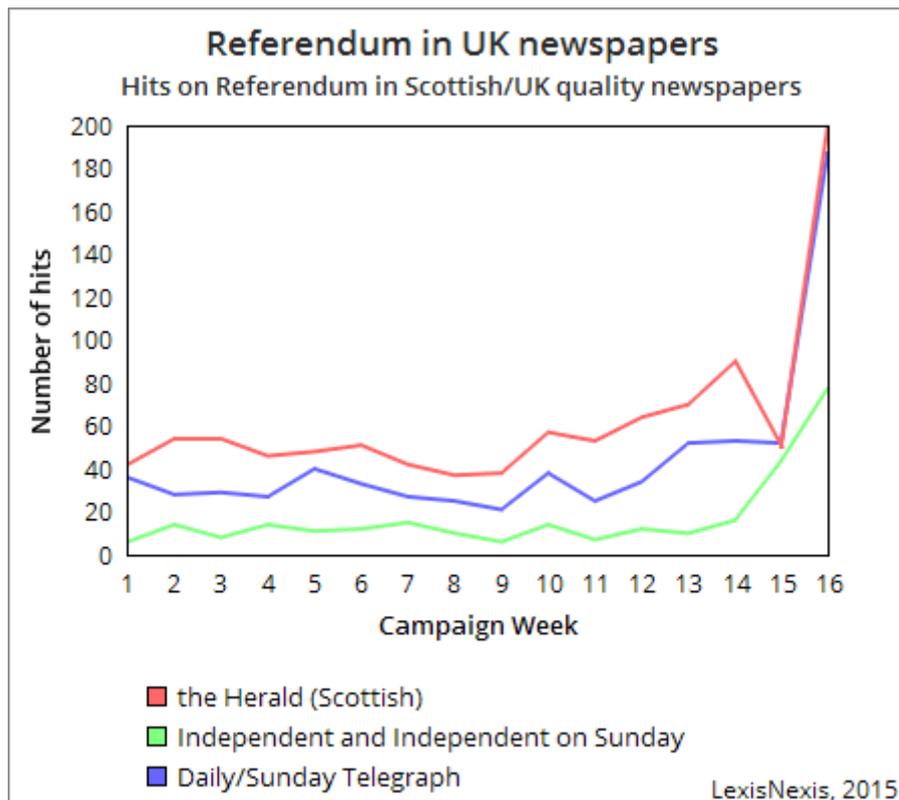


Figure 5.2: Overview of referendum subject hits with Daily Telegraph added

When adding the Daily Telegraph to the graph, it paints a different picture. Where the conclusion from figure 5.1 would be that the referendum could be considered a regional issue up to week 14, this graph suggests that even though the coverage of national newspaper went up in the final stage of the campaign, it was already significant during the campaign in the Daily Telegraph, suggesting it was not only a regional, but also a national issue. The difference in coverage between the Independent and the Daily Telegraph cannot be explained, but it has to be concluded that the referendum is considered a national issue throughout the campaign. This, as a difference in coverage of the referendum between Scottish and national newspapers is expected, but the difference is not very big, or the coverage of the national newspapers is not low enough, to consider it a regional issue. Therefore, regarding H7b: *If the referendum is considered a regional issue, then Scottish Parties could, though not necessarily will deviate from national standpoints on devolution* it is concluded here that the referendum was considered a national issue, which is why this hypothesis is rejected.

Regarding the last hypothesis that was derived from Libbrecht *et al* (ibid.) it has been established in the previous paragraphs, that the referendum can be considered a national issue. As was already set out in the section on H6A, the party line on devolution that had been set out by the national parties in their 2010 manifestos was backed by the Scottish parties in their 2011 manifestos. During the referendum itself, the Scottish parties followed the same line. Their pledge in mid-June stated that they are supporters of devolution, but did not promise any concrete new powers. The

national leaders supported this pledge, and signed it in August as well. As has become clear from the reconstruction, although the Better Together campaign was at times incoherent, there was no sign of the Scottish parties abandoning the party line on devolution set out by the national parties earlier.

Therefore, regarding *H7: If the referendum is considered a national issue, the national parties determine the party line on devolution, and this line will be backed by the Scottish parties* this hypothesis is confirmed for the case of the independence referendum and the vow. During the referendum campaign, which was considered a national issue, the Scottish parties did not deviate from their respective national party line on devolution. Stating they were supporters of devolution, but not explicitly pressing for further devolution, or promising to fight for specified further powers.

5.6 Convery's high and low politics issues

The final theoretical approach that was included in the theoretical framework was Convery's (2013) high and low politics. The hypotheses that were derived from this approach stated:

H8: If the referendum is considered a high politics issue, it is more likely national parties get involved in the campaign

H9: If the central issues in the campaign are high politics, national parties are more likely to get involved in the campaign

H10: It is likely that promises on devolution will address the same issues (high/low) as the main issues during the campaign, if possible

In order to confirm or reject these hypotheses, it has to be determined first whether the referendum itself, as well as the central issues of the campaign, is considered as high or low politics issues. What the central issues were during the campaign was set out in the final section of the reconstruction. Therefore, the next section first sets out whether the referendum and the main issues can be considered as high or low politics, by using Convery's (ibid.) theoretical approach, before moving on to confirming or rejecting the hypotheses. The operationalization of the concept of high and low politics was given in the methods chapter.

First, the referendum itself is considered here as a high politics issue, because the result of the referendum is potentially disrupting to high politics areas of an economic/financial and foreign policy nature. Furthermore, the fact that the referendum was covered in national quality newspapers throughout the campaign period, as was shown in the previous section, and the fact that allowing countries to hold a referendum is part of the Constitution, which is a reserved matter also makes it a high politics issue. Second, Economy/Jobs/Business is also considered a high politics issue, because this clearly relates to high politics issues of an economic and financial nature. Also, employment and trade and industry, which are issues part of this category, are all reserved matters. Third, Currency also has to be defined as a high politics issue, because it relates heavily to financial

policy, and is also the best example of the issue the national parties got involved in during the referendum. Currency is not specifically mentioned as a reserved matter, because outside of the referendum context it would not be an issue. For the previous reasons mentioned therefore, it is still considered a high politics issue. Fourth, NATO/Defense relates to foreign policy, and therefore has to be defined here as a high politics issue. Furthermore, both foreign policy and defense are reserved matters. Fifth, Oil/Gas revenues have large implications on the financial policy of the UK, as they are a large source of revenue, which is why these are also defined as high politics. Furthermore oil is also one of the reserved matters, reinforcing oil being a high politics issue. Sixth, NHS/health is a devolved issue, and not related to major economic, financial and foreign policy, making it a low politics issue. Seventh, the EU is part of foreign policy, making it a high politics issue. Finally, pensions relate heavily to financial policy, but are also part of benefits and social security, making it a high politics issue. The coverage from the Herald and Independent on each issue can be found in Appendix 8. Hence, what has become clear from labeling the main issues of the campaign is that the campaign revolved heavily around high politics issue. The only main issue that is labeled as low politics is the NHS/health, which was added to the campaign at a late stage by Scottish Government. Otherwise the referendum itself and the main issues were high politics.

The first hypothesis that was derived from Convery (ibid.) stated *H8: If the referendum is considered a high politics issue, it is more likely national parties get involved in the campaign* because according to Convery (ibid.) the Westminster government is likely to take part in high politics issues. The referendum was labeled as a high politics issue for several reasons, which have been briefly set out above, and are explained here. First of all, the referendum outcome potentially had a big impact on high politics issues, which is major economic, financial and foreign policy. Second of all, the ability for Scotland to hold a referendum had to be granted by the Westminster government, as stated in the Constitution, which in itself is a reserved matter, making it high politics. Finally, it is argued here that the referendum is not only labeled as a high politics issue, but was also perceived as a high politics issue, which follows from the referendum coverage in two national quality newspapers, as is shown in figure 5.2.

The reconstruction has made clear that, at the late stage of the campaign, the national parties got involved as well. But this does not confirm the hypothesis, because the referendum itself was a high politics issue, and was perceived as a high politics issue, throughout the campaign, and not merely at the latest stage, which is when the national parties got involved. Even though the referendum did gain more national attention, during and after week 14, the week of the shock poll. The evidence presented here however, suggests that the referendum was and was perceived as a high politics issue throughout the campaign and not merely in the latest stage. Therefore, this hypothesis cannot be confirmed for the case of the independence referendum, because the evidence

suggests that something other than the fact that the referendum was considered as a high politics issue, led to the national parties getting involved in the campaign. A causal relation cannot be confirmed from the evidence presented here.

For H9, the central issues of the campaign were derived from the Scotsman coverage in the reconstruction. As they have been labeled above, it is already clear that the central issues of the campaign are considered as high politics. To illustrate this, figure 5.3 and 5.4 show the coverage per campaign week of the top5 issues from the reconstruction for the Herald and the Daily and Independent.

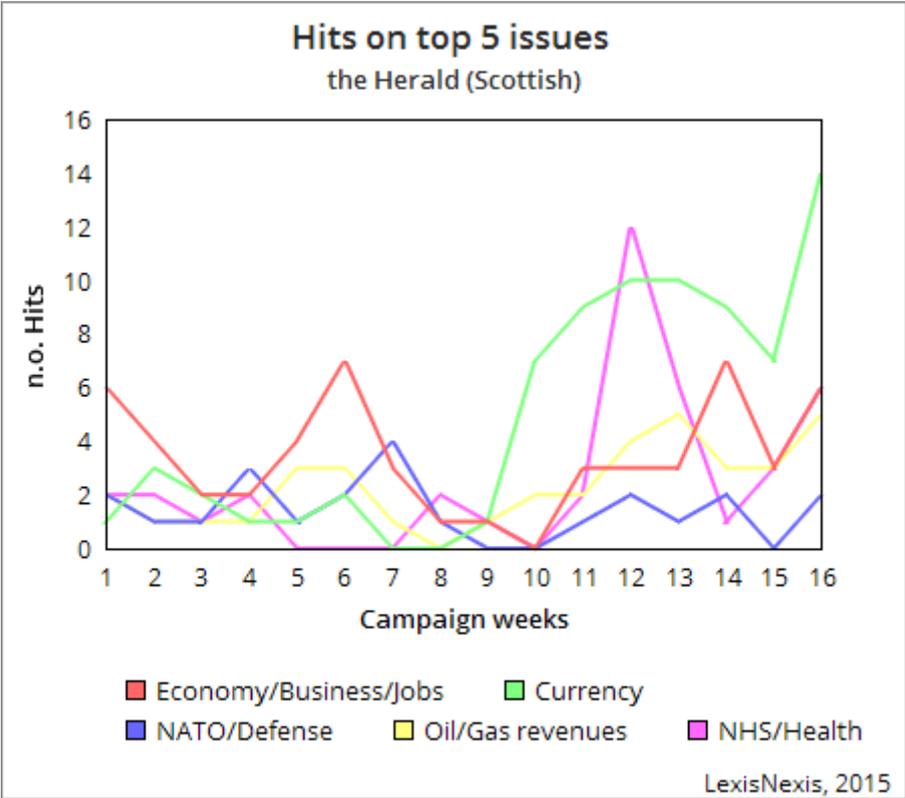


Figure 5.3: Overview of hits on the top5 issues the Herald

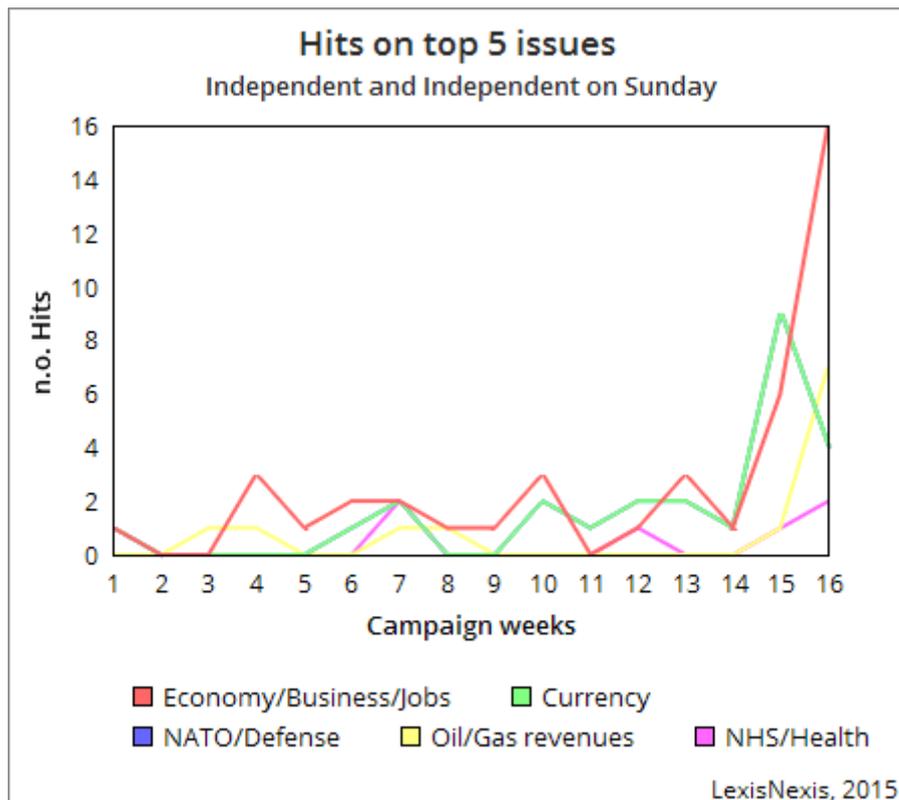


Figure 5.4: Overview of hits on the top5 issues Independent and Independent on Sunday

The issues in figures 5.3 and 5.4, apart from the NHS, which reaches a peak late in the campaign, are high politics issues. In the national newspaper, the NHS as the only main low politics issue does not really reach prominence in coverage at all, making all of the main national issues high politics. This indicates that the hypothesis could be confirmed. However, as was argued for H8, the national parties got involved in the campaign at a late stage, whereas the dominance of high politics issues was present throughout the entire campaign. Therefore the line of argument resembles that of the first of Convery's (ibid.) hypothesis. The timing of the involvement of the national parties, suggests that something other than the nature of the issues has influenced the national parties getting involved in the campaign. This was most likely the shock poll. Therefore, the second hypothesis derived from Convery (ibid.) H9: *If the central issues in the campaign are high politics, national parties are more likely to get involved in the campaign* cannot be confirmed for the case of the 2014 independence referendum and the vow.

In order to confirm or reject H10, an analysis was performed of the vow and other proposals for more power that have been made throughout the campaign, which can be found in Appendix 3. This hypothesis is important to include, because if the vow is more than a campaign issue, it should have substance as well. If the vow makes promises on main issues during the campaign, it is less likely to be purely a campaign strategy, than when other issues are addressed which have not been

important during the campaign. What has to be noted also is that H10 states that it only addresses the same issues, if possible. As has been established, the main issues in the campaign have been high politics issues. Therefore, on many of these issues, such as currency for example, the national parties cannot make any promises in the vow, as these are issues at play in a different arena than devolution. Therefore, it is important to consider whether the main issues of the campaign, could be addresses in the vow in the first place.

The first main issue, Economy/Jobs/Business could be addressed in a proposal such as the vow. More powers on creating jobs or more control over Scottish economy or business could be granted to Scottish Parliament. This issue however, was not discussed in the vow. No promises were made for more powers for Scottish Parliament relating to this issue, apart from the promise that the modern purpose of the UK is to share resources for prosperity. The second main issue, currency, is a clear example of a main issue in the campaign that could not be addressed in the vow. After all the debate on currency revolved around the question of what currency an independent Scotland would use. The third main issue, NATO/Defense, is also not an issue on which promises for more powers can be made. It was addressed in the vow, in general terms of Westminster ensuring security. The EU, the fourth main issue was not mentioned in the vow, it could have been, in the way that the leaders could have acknowledged the wish of Scots to remain within the UK. The oil and gas revenues are a high politics issue that could be addressed in a proposal as the vow. Promises could have been made regarding the say of Scottish Parliament in where oil and gas revenues should go for instance, or they could have promised Scotland a larger part of the revenues. This issue however, was not discussed in the vow. The sixth main issue, the NHS was discussed in the vow extensively, and this is also the main suspect out of all the issues, because this is the only devolved, and thereby low politics issue, out of the main issues in the campaign. Regarding the NHS, the vow did not make any new promises. It only reaffirmed existing structures, with exception of the promise that Scottish Parliament could keep the NHs in public hands if they wished to. This was already the case, but was confirmed by the national parties for the first time during the campaign. Finally, regarding pensions, it is an issue that could be devolved and therefore it could be addressed. In the vow it was only addressed in the way that UK funding of pensions was guaranteed.

The issues that were addressed in the vow were Pensions, NHS/Health, Barnett Allocation, Defense, Public Services and the Constitution. The coding of the vow and other proposals can be found in Appendix 3. So, out of the six issues discussed in the vow, three of these were central issues during the campaign as well. So, half of the vow addressed the central issues of the campaign, and the other half referred to side-issues. This makes a conclusion on the hypothesis *H10: It is likely that promises on devolution will address the same issues (high/low) as the main issues during the campaign, if possible* difficult. Currency was the only issue that could not be addressed in the vow,

with the EU as a close second perhaps. So, it seems that the hypothesis can carefully be confirmed. The vow did address the same issues as the main issues during the campaign, but also included some symbolic issues, such as the Constitution and the Barnett Allocation. Furthermore, real promises of new powers were not made on the issues that were addressed in the vow, not for the main issues of the campaign either. The only real promise for more powers made was the fact that Scottish Parliament would become a part of the British constitution, making it irreversible. Apart from this, it was promised Scottish Parliament would receive extensive new powers, but these were still not specified. So, even though this hypothesis is confirmed, the lack of actual promises reinforces the idea posed by Mazzoleni (2009) that promises were only made out of competitive advantage.

This section presented the empirical results and the consequences for the hypotheses. The answers to the research questions posed in the introduction chapter are discussed hereafter in the conclusion. This section now shortly recaps on the main findings of this chapter. It can be concluded that the theoretical approach by Mazzoleni (*ibid.*) holds the greatest explanatory power for the case of the independence referendum and the vow. Swenden and McEwen (2014) also hold some explanatory power, but not all of their hypotheses could be confirmed from this research. Spina's (2013) government determinants for decentralization did not resemble the reality of the characteristics of the Westminster government. His approach therefore does not fit the case of the independence referendum and the vow. Toubeau and Wagner's (2013) approach could not be confirmed or rejected based on this research, due to conflicting evidence. The hypotheses derived from Libbrecht *et al* (2011) gave a mixed result. Finally, Convery's (2013) approach does seem to hold some explanatory power for the independence referendum and the vow, but it has to be combined with other approaches such as Mazzoleni's (2009) which were expected beforehand. An important aspect of the hypotheses that were not rejected nor confirmed, were the hidden dynamics. These hidden dynamics refer to what was going on within parties and within the yes and no campaign, and finally within the inner-circle that brokered the vow. With the method chosen for this thesis, process-tracing and content analysis, these hidden dynamics were not unveiled.

6. Conclusion

This thesis has aimed to explain why the three national party leaders came to a joint pledge for further devolution for Scotland just two days before the independence referendum in Scotland on 18 September 2014. Devolution has become an important element of UK politics, and this pledge ensured further devolution would become reality. The decision came at the end of an intense referendum campaign, at the point where it had become unclear what the referendum result would be. The no campaign had been ahead throughout the campaign period, but this changed in the final weeks. This, combined with the fact that the three national parties traditionally have very different stances on devolution, is why this case was selected. The question this thesis aims to answer is *how can we explain why the leaders of the national parties decided to make a combined promise for further devolutions to Scotland?* In order to answer this question, five sub-questions were asked as well, which were outlined in the introduction.

Because this thesis aims to explain party behavior, a party-centered theoretical framework was designed, which includes various aspects of party behavior. It takes into account party behavior based on competitive advantage (Mazzoleni, 2009), general determinants for decentralization such as the presence of a strong regional party (Spina, 2013) and the cultural and economic dimension of party ideology (Toubeau and Wagner, 2013). Furthermore, the theoretical framework acknowledges that devolution is already a reality in the UK, by adding theory on intergovernmental relations and the shadow of hierarchy (Swenden and McEwen, 2014) that devolution has created and by adding theory on the way the national parties behave when it comes to devolved or regional issues (Libbrecht *et al*, 2011). Finally, the theoretical framework includes one approach which is not party-centered, high and low politics (Convery, 2013). This approach states that every issue is considered as either high or low politics, and the way parties behave is influenced by whether issues are considered as high or low. Because of the latter, this approach was included, because whether devolution and the referendum are considered to be high or low politics, could influence party behavior.

This thesis had a case study design, which means a qualitative approach was adopted, with process-tracing and content analysis as the main methods that were employed. In order to answer the research questions, it was necessary to make clear the context of the referendum, as well as an overview of what happened during the campaign. Process-tracing based on newspaper articles was conducted to achieve this. Furthermore, content analysis of various data such as the vow and other proposals for more power and party programs of the 2010 general elections and 2011 Scottish elections were analyzed in order to see whether the vow was a logic consequence of previous proposals and to see whether Scottish parties had deviated from the national party line on devolution, or to answer other sub-questions.

The first sub-question was, how did the yes and no campaigns operate and specifically, how did the no campaign operate consisting of different parties? The yes campaign was considered a grassroots campaign, which aimed at having no explicit party linkages. This however, was not entirely successful as the figure head of the Yes campaign was SNP leader and First Minister Alex Salmond, which gave the appearance that the yes campaign was affiliated with the SNP. The main criticisms were not so much directed at the yes campaign itself, but at the Scottish Government, for their plans after independence. The no campaign was linked to the main unionist parties, with Alistair Darling (Labour) being the official campaign leader. The campaign was criticized for being negative, and it became clear during the campaign, that the combination of the three parties together did not always work (*Scotland on Sunday*, 2014; Torrance, 2014, p.37-38; Watt, 2014; Macwhirter, 2014). This can be seen as a critical element in any campaign, because if the combination of the three parties in one campaign does not work, it distorts a united vision and strategy of how to achieve the campaign goals. If the parties in the campaign cannot unite and put out one clear message, the electorate gets confused. It was because of this that the Daily Record editor decided to attempt getting the three main party leaders to come together on devolution.

The second question addressed the main issues in the campaign, what were these and in what way did the vow address these issues? The main issues that were derived from the reconstruction were Economy/Business/Jobs, the EU, Currency, NATO/Defense, Pensions, NHS/Health and Oil/Gas revenues. These were all high politics issues apart from NHS/Health. The analysis coupled these main issues to the vow, to see in what way the vow addressed the main issues of the campaign. I found that the vow did address some of the main issues of the campaign, though not always in the same way as the campaign had. Furthermore, despite addressing the same issues, it did not make specific promises on these, the vow remained rather vague on specific new powers Scotland would receive on these issues in the event of a no vote. So, the vow did address some of the main issues of the campaign where possible, but it did not make specific promises on new powers, which is why it is concluded here it was more a strategic document, than one acknowledging the intrinsic values of further devolution.

The third question is who initiated the vow and in how was it designed? The vow was initiated by Daily Record editor Murray Foote (Foote, 2015). He explained that the Daily Record was pro-union, therefore aligned with the Better Together campaign. However, the relationship between the Daily Record and the campaign had become uncomfortable, because of the clear influence of the Conservatives in the campaign (ibid.). The Daily Record considered the fact that Better Together did not offer clear new powers for Scotland in the event of a no vote as most critical. Therefore, after the shock poll, the Daily Record attacked the national party leaders and demanded a commitment for new powers before 18 September (ibid.). Then, the Daily Record joined forces with Gordon Brown,

former Labour leader, they came up with the idea of a joint promise for more powers to be signed by the three national party leaders. Foote and Brown together convinced the three party leaders to join. The vow was written by "a committee of politicians and their aides and the original draft was amended at different times and by different party leaders. Not one word was composed by any Daily Record journalist" (ibid.). Although the vow was not initiated by the three main party leaders, it did work in their competitive advantage, as was set out in the Analysis chapter.

The fourth question asked whether the polls actually influence party leaders' behavior and in what way? Evidence points to the fact that the shock poll did in fact influence the behavior of the three main parties, at least indirectly. After the shock poll, the Daily Record editor decided to try and let the three main parties come to a joint pledge on devolution, which had not been tried before. Furthermore, the polls, which for a long time gave the no campaign a considerable lead, are likely to have been part of the reason that there was no deal on devolution before the shock poll. The polls that put the yes campaign ahead at the end of the campaign period is likely to have given the yes campaign extra momentum, but this was not a particular topic of research for this thesis.

Finally, did the Scottish unionist parties put pressure on the national parties in any way? This question was derived from the approach by Libbrecht *et al* (2011). If the answer to this question is yes, and the Scottish unionist parties put pressure on the national parties to promise further devolution, this would provide another explanation for the vow. In the analysis chapter this was discussed, as the party programs of the most recent elections of both national and Scottish parties were analyzed. From this, it could not be concluded that the Scottish unionist parties put pressure on the national parties in any way, on the matter of further devolution. The Scottish parties did attempt to provide some clarity on the topic of devolution during the campaign, with the pledge they signed on 16 June. This pledge however, did not make any specific promises and only stated the parties supported devolution, which was confirmed by the national party leaders. Therefore, though a pledge like this could be seen as a form of pressure, it is not because the pledge did not go beyond what the national parties would have promised at the time.

Taking into account the findings of the empirical chapters and the answers to the sub-questions, we can now answer this thesis' main research question: *how can we explain why the leaders of the national parties decided to make a combined promise for further devolutions to Scotland two days before the 2014 Independence Referendum?* The first occurrence that allowed for the vow to happen was the decision of the Westminster government in 2012 to opt for a binary referendum question, not including the option for further devolution, as the SNP had aimed for. The main explanation for the vow, as was theorized by Mazzoleni (2009) was that the vow itself as well as the concrete promises that were made, were in the competitive advantage of the three main party leaders. Furthermore, the shadow of hierarchy (Swenden and McEwen, 2014) that is normally

present in Scottish politics, was absent during the referendum campaign, because a yes vote in the referendum campaign would mean this shadow disappearing altogether. This led to the Scottish Government making concrete promises to Scots on what Scotland would look like after independence. This behavior put pressure on the main party leaders to make promises as well, to promise some form of change in the event of a no vote. This pressure, combined with the fact the vow was in the competitive advantage of the three main parties and the shock poll that was published in early September, which was the first poll to put the yes campaign in the lead, made independence a more realistic threat to the national parties. This provides an explanation for the vow itself, as well as the timing of it. Hence, the combination of the party-centered approach and the data that was processed, has given insight into why the party leaders joined to sign a pledge on further devolution, and explains why they did it so late in the campaign. The general determinants designed by Spina (2013) were not determinants for decentralization in this case. Other approaches such as Convery (2013) and Libbrecht *et al* (2011) were employed in order to answer the sub questions that were posed.

This thesis designed its own theoretical framework, based on a party-centered approach, in order to explain the behavior of the three party leaders. The way it was designed, allows the theoretical framework to be applied to other cases involving a party or parties' decision to devolve, as long as there already is some form of devolved or regional government. However, the framework is rather UK-oriented most of the theoretical approaches in the framework, Hopkin (2009), Mazzoleni (2009), Swenden and McEwen (2014), Libbrecht *et al* (2011) and Convery (2013) focused (among other countries) on the UK. However, there are no signs at the moment the framework could not be applied to a non-UK case. It can be a demanding framework, as it requires many different theoretical approaches to be applied, and then combined into coherent analyses and conclusions. However, by taking into account both party behavior and intergovernmental relations, it does deal with the party and government dimension and the relation between these. And by including general determinants, such as the presence of a regional party, and ideology it also includes usual suspects for devolution (Deacon, 2012). Finally, by including issues, it also takes into account the context, which I believe is often important when looking at devolution, especially in the context of an election or referendum campaign.

It has become clear however, that some of the hypotheses could not be confirmed or rejected, mostly because these methods and data did not reveal certain hidden dynamics, which were addressed in the last chapter. These hidden dynamics consist of what was going on within the campaigns and the process of the vow itself. Additional interviews with individuals involved with both campaigns and brokering the vow, could give insight into these hidden dynamics. Therefore, it

serves as a recommendation for further research, especially after the process of further devolution to Scotland as a result of the vow is concluded, which is still ongoing at the time of writing.

Furthermore, this thesis analyzed the presence of certain issues during the campaign, but only from one Scottish and one national quality newspaper. Therefore, further research could look into the presence and discussion on these issues on other quality newspapers as well, to see whether the conclusions still hold. Other suggestions regarding further research would be how the shadow of hierarchy potentially changes as a result of the vow and further devolution. It could be argued it will be less present, because Scottish Parliament will have more powers, but the opposite could be argued as well, with the Westminster government tightly holding on to the powers they still have, and checking the Scottish Parliament extensively to see in what way they deal with their new powers.

Also, it could be argued that some of these hypotheses could be confirmed or rejected, by taking into account the role of the media, which was left out the theoretical framework of this thesis. Still, I am not entirely convinced the role of the media is indeed a factor that needs to be included in order to solve all of the puzzles this thesis poses. Particularly important in this case was the role of the Daily Record in initiating and brokering the vow. It could be argued that this is a clear influence of a media actor, which is why this should be included in the theoretical framework for this case. However, for the Daily Record in this particular case, I argue, was not so much a media actor, as it was aligned with the Better Together campaign. Foote (2015) clearly states in his editorial, that the Daily Record had the same stance as the Better Together campaign, to make sure independence would not be the outcome of the referendum. However, they were critical about the way the Better Together campaign ran, the inner-dynamics and their lack of clear promises regarding devolution.

In this sense, by initiating the vow, it is argued here that the Daily Record was not acting as an independent media actor, but as an instrument that gave the Better Together campaign the opportunity to make further promises on devolution. Hence, they acted here more as a campaign actor, than a media actor, which is why it is concluded here that the exclusion of the media in the theoretical framework was not problematic for analyzing the direct circumstances which led to the vow.

This leaves the questions of whether the vow can be considered a win for Scottish Politics in general, the national party leaders and the SNP. Regarding Scottish politics in general, the Scottish government's aim at the start of their term, was to gain independence for Scotland. Although this proved to be beyond their reach, they did receive a promise for further powers for Scotland in the vow. This may not seem like a win, as they aimed at independence, but taking into account the fact that Scottish Government aimed at having a three option referendum; no change, more devolution or independence, the outcome of more devolution still can be considered a win for Scottish politics

in general. Still, it would have been a larger victory if the vow had contained concrete promises on which powers would be devolved. Regarding the question of whether the vow turned out to be a win for the national party leaders, the answer is similar. The national party leaders set out with the aim of keeping Scotland in the UK, which was the outcome, despite the fact that they do have to give up more powers to Scotland. So, it is argued here that the vow can be considered a win for both Scottish politics, who are likely to receive more powers as a result of the vow, and for the national parties, who succeeded in keeping Scotland within the UK albeit they do have to give further powers to Scotland, which is still governed by the SNP.

This leads to the final point of reflection, was the vow a win for the SNP? Considering the fact that preliminary results of the Scottish Referendum Study (Henderson and Mitchell, 2015) suggest that the vow was not decisive for the outcome of the referendum, rendering the impact of the vow on the referendum outcome marginal (Cramb, 2015), it is concluded here that the vow can thus be considered a win for the SNP. After all, if the vow is not what lost the referendum, it becomes no more than a promise for new powers for Scotland, which would be a win not just for Scottish politics, but for the SNP as well, who do support further devolution. I agree with Henderson and Mitchell (2015) regarding the impact of the vow on the electorate. I believe the impact of the vow on Scottish politics is likely to be larger than the impact it had on the referendum outcome, because it is likely that two days before the referendum, people have made up their minds on what they will vote.

All in all, this thesis has attempted to provide more clarity on the case of the 2014 independence referendum, and explain the occurrence of the vow so late in the campaign. As expected, the explanations consists of different conditions which worked together, leading to the three main party leaders not being able to avoid promising additional devolution in the event of a no vote. In what way this promise has actually led to further devolution for Scotland is beyond the scope of this thesis, but it has become clear that further devolution for Scotland is now inevitable.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Overview of Data for content analysis

Data overview	Theoretical approach	Data to analyze
	Mazzoleni	<p>The vow</p> <p>Other proposals for more power to Scotland like the vow</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Con: Stratgclyde's report on further powers 2 June Lab: Brown's 12step plan for Scotland 9 Sept Lab: Brown's 10 ways Scotland could benefit 2 June Scottish Leaders' pledge 16 june Labour march 2014 <p>LibDem March 2014</p> <p>Calman Commission report</p> <p>Combined with information from reconstruction</p>
	Libbrecht et al.	<p>Party Manifestos on regional issues and devolution</p> <p>National</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conservatives national elections 2010 Labour national elections 2010 Liberal Democrats national elections 2010 SNP national elections 2010 <p>Regional</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scottish Conservatives Scottish elections 2011 Scottish Labour Scottish elections 2011 Scottish Liberal Democrats Scottish elections 2011 SNP Scottish elections 2011

		Combined with information from the reconstruction
Spina	<p>Government Determinants</p> <p>Stable Governments: 2010-2005-2001-1997</p> <p>The number of threats from alternative majority governments that can be formed by different parties in the legislature</p> <p>Powerful Governments: 2010-2005-2001-1997</p> <p>The percentage of the parties' legislative seats in government, which can influence the policy agenda</p> <p>Rise of Regionalist Parties</p> <p>The Number of SNP Seats in:</p> <p>Westminster: 2010-2005-2001-1997</p> <p>Scottish Parliament: 2011-2007-2003-1999</p>	
Toubeau and Wagner	<p>Party manifestos on Devolution: Economic or Cultural?</p> <p>National</p> <p>Conservatives national elections 2010</p> <p>Labour national elections 2010</p> <p>Liberal Democrats national elections 2010</p> <p>SNP national elections 2010</p> <p>Scottish</p> <p>Scottish Conservatives Scottish elections 2011</p> <p>Scottish Labour Scottish elections 2011</p> <p>Scottish Liberal Democrats Scottish elections 2011</p> <p>SNP Scottish elections 2011</p>	
Swenden and McEwen	<p>Party manifestos difference national-Scottish</p> <p>National</p> <p>Conservatives national elections 2010</p> <p>Labour national elections 2010</p> <p>Liberal Democrats national elections 2010</p>	

		<p>SNP national elections 2010 Scottish Scottish Conservatives Scottish elections 2011 Scottish Labour Scottish elections 2011 Scottish Liberal Democrats Scottish elections 2011 SNP Scottish elections 2011</p> <p>Combined with information from reconstruction</p>
	Convery	<p>High and Low politics --> Main issues from newspapers Newspaper articles 100 days before Referendum on issues National Independent Scottish the Herald</p> <p>Combined with information from the reconstruction and analysis of the vow</p>

Appendix 2: Code sheet

Code sheet	Theoretical Approach	Data to Analyze	Selecting	Search for	Analysis questions
Unit of Analysis: Fragments are selected on words, but sentences and paragraphs are analyzed in order to grasp the meaning of the content	Mazzoleni	Proposals for Devolution	Words	Devolution Issues: Barnett allocation/formula NHS/Health Constitution Social services/provision Taxes/Borrowing/ Revenues Transport Jobs Elections Local Government Other	What are the issues addressed in the proposals? What do the proposals want regarding devolution?
	Libbrecht et al.	Party Manifestos: National 2010 Scottish 2011	Words	Both: Devolution, Referendum National: Scotland	National: What do the national party manifestos say about Devolution, the referendum and Scotland in general? Scottish: What do the regional party manifestos say about Devolution and the referendum?
	Toubeau and Wagner	Party Manifestos: National 2010 Scottish 2011	Words	Both: Devolution, Referendum National: Scotland	National and Scottish: Do they oppose or support devolution, are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? Are they conservative or liberal on both dimensions?
	Swenden and McEwen	Party Manifestos: National 2010 Scottish 2011	Words	Both: Devolution, Referendum National: Scotland	Specifically analyze any differences on these matters between national and Scottish. Do regional parties refer to national standpoints on the topics?

Appendix 3: Analysis of proposals for more power

Proposal	Publishing Date	Author(s)	Context of the proposal	Recommendations on powers/ promises for more powers made in proposal/report	Issues referred to in proposal
The Vow	16 September 2014 in the Daily Record	signed by David Cameron, Ed Miliband and Nick Clegg (brokered by Gordon Brown and Scottish Labour)	Two days before the referendum, the Daily Record published the vow. A deal between the three unionist parties on what powers Scotland would receive in the event of a no vote	<p>It consisted of three guarantees:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New powers for Scottish Parliament Holyrood will receive 'extensive new powers' Scottish Parliament will become irreversible part of British constitution 2. Fairness to Scotland the modern purpose of the Union is ensuring opportunity and security. It shares resources for defence, prosperity and welfare. UK funding of pensions and healthcare is guaranteed. 3. Scotland will be able to spend more on the NHS if the people want to do so. The Barnett allocation will continue and the final decisions on spending in public services and on the NHS will remain with Scottish Parliament. Scottish Parliament will be able to keep the NHS in public hands and protect it if they wish to. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Pensions (national) -NHS/Health -Barnett Allocation -Defence (national) -Social services -Constitution
Gordon's 12 new powers for Scotland	9 September 2014 in the Daily	Gordon Brown	This was Gordon Brown's proposal, who was personally convinced that further powers for	<p>Gordon Brown's proposal consisted of 12 new powers Scotland should receive:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. New job creating powers: full devolution of Work Programme 2. New transport powers: devolve railway powers so Scotland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Jobs/Employment/Equality -Transport -Land use

	Record		<p>Scotland would be necessary in order to keep Scotland within the UK. This was a calling to the national party leaders to promise Scotland these new powers.</p>	<p>gets a non-profit option for ScotRail</p> <p>3. New borrowing powers for social and economic purposes. Borrow up to 22 billion pounds for capital investment.</p> <p>4. New land use powers, fully devolve Crown Estate's responsibility for seabed and foreshore to local authorities.</p> <p>5. New social care powers, devolve Attendance Allowance for those aged over 65 or disabled people.</p> <p>6. New housing benefit powers, devolve housing benefit to Scottish Parliament</p> <p>7. New rights on Employment, responsibility for administration of employment tribunals.</p> <p>8. New Health and Safety powers, power to establish a Scottish Health and Safety Executive</p> <p>9. New equality powers: new powers to ensure fair representation of women on Scotland's public boards as well as in other public appointments.</p> <p>10. New Constitutional powers, making Scotland a permanent irreversible part of the constitution</p> <p>11. New powers for elections, administrative and order-making powers for Scottish and local elections. UK will keep responsibility for General and European elections.</p> <p>12. New income tax powers, biggest transfer of fiscal power in UK history</p>	<p>-Borrowing</p> <p>-Social services/provisions</p> <p>-Health and Safety</p> <p>-Constitution</p> <p>-Elections</p> <p>-Taxes/Borrowing/Revenues</p>
(Scottish) leaders	16 June	leaders of	16 June the Scottish	They declare themselves supporters of further devolution after	-Taxes/Borrowing/

pledge	and 5 August	Scottish unionist parties, 5 August signed by national leaders of unionist parties	leaders of unionist parties signed a joint declaration, making a statement of intent for further devolution in the event of a no vote. The declaration was later signed by the national leaders as well	<p>the latest devolution that resulted in the Scotland Act 2012.</p> <p>Further powers in areas of fiscal responsibility and social security.</p> <p>Refer to their own plans for more powers (Labour, Conservatives and Liberal Democrats) do not offer clear guaranteed powers in case of a no vote.</p> <p>Promise to deliver more powers as soon as possible in 2015.</p> <p>No joint promises on what powers will be delivered, no clear blueprint.</p>	<p>Revenues</p> <p>-Social Security</p>
Conservatives plan by the Strathclyde Commission	presented on 2 June	Strathclyde commission ordered by Scottish Conservatives	The Scottish Conservatives set up a Commission to look at issues that faced Scottish Parliament, devolution and the relationship with Westminster in the event of a no vote. They presented ideas for future Scottish Governance.	<p>Recommendations made (from executive summary of key recommendations)</p> <p>1. Financial: Responsibility for determining rates and bands of income tax. Creation of a new independent Scottish Fiscal Commission, charged with producing macroeconomic and fiscal forecast. More taxes under control of Scottish Parliament, a case could be made for devolving housing benefit and attendance allowance and for giving Scottish Parliament the power to supplement welfare benefits.</p> <p>2. Parliamentary and Governmental reform: improving legislative scrutiny, stronger checks and balances. More powers towards local government.</p>	<p>-Taxes/Borrowing/Revenues</p> <p>-Social Services (are no strong recommendations, a case could be made to devolve these)</p> <p>-local government</p>
Labour's plan	March 2014	Scottish Labour	Presented by the Scottish Labour Devolution	Recommendations made for more powers to Scottish Parliament (from Summary of Recommendations)	<p>-Constitution</p> <p>-(Scottish) Elections</p>

		Devolution Commission	Commission before start of the campaign	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scottish Parliament should become part of the constitution, become indissoluble. 2. Scottish Parliament should receive administrative powers for Scottish Elections 3. Allow the Scottish Parliament to increase their revenues with 2 billion pounds 4. Additional Control for Scottish Parliament on income taxes, from 10p to 15p. 75% of basic income rate tax will be under control of Scottish Parliament 5. Allow Scotland to introduce new Scottish Progressive Rates of Income tax, Scotland can increase the rates of tax in the higher and additional bands. Enables Scotland to alter level of tax + progressivity of the system. 6. Keep the Barnett formula, but adapt it since Scotland will be able to generate more revenues itself 7. Devolve DWP work programme to local authorities 8. Devolve Housing Benefit and Attendance Allowance 9. Establish a Scottish Health and Safety Executive 10. devolve Responsibility for the administration of employment tribunals and the procedural rules associated with them 11. Devolve enforcement of equality legislation 12. Establish Scottish model for consumer advice and advocacy 13. Devolve railway powers, allow Scotland to go for non-profit railway options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - local government - Taxes/Borrowing/ Revenues - Barnett formula - Jobs/Employment/ Equality - Social services/provisions - Health and Safety - Consumer rights - transport (railway) - Islands
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				<p>14. Develop and extend powers to Scottish Islands of Shetland, Orkney and Western Isles.</p> <p>15. Extensive argument is made to give local authorities and communities more power</p>	
Liberal Democrat's plan	March 2014	Campbell Home Rule and Community Rule Commission	<p>This was the second report by the Campbell Commission, after the first in October 2012. The second report was written in light of the Independence referendum, the commission believes federalism provides better solutions for Scotland than independence.</p>	<p>Recommendations made for more powers to Scottish Parliament (from the summary of recommendations):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Next Cabinet should be concerned with provisions to strengthen Scotland's powers within the UK 2. The UK government should analyze what options are available to enhance the powers of Scottish Parliament. 3. Scottish Parliament has to make sure the independent fiscal body is established, to cope with further financial power after a No vote 4. Within 30 days after the referendum a meeting should be held where parties and wider interests can meet to secure consensus on further powers to Scottish Parliament. What these powers will be should be set out by the political parties in the 2015 party manifestos. 5. A further Scotland Act should be made in order to make necessary changes to Tax powers. 6. A resolution of statue should be made in Scottish Parliament and Westminster to establish the permanence of Scottish Parliament (= constitutional change). <p>From the General Summary:</p>	<p>-Constitution</p> <p>-Taxes/Borrowing/Revenues</p>

				<p>1. Scotland should be raising more of their own revenues, rather than receiving UK funds.</p> <p>2. Scottish Parliament should be permanently entrenched (in the constitution)</p>	
Calman Commission report	June 2009	The Calman Commission for Scottish Devolution, was set up in 2008	This commission focused specifically on devolution to Scotland and wrote two reports on Scotland. The latter, which was presented in 2009, is included in the analysis because the 2010 party manifestos refer to this report as agreeing with the recommendations made. A number of these recommendations were incorporated in the 2012 Scotland Act. The recommendations discussed here only concern further powers.	<p>Recommendations for further powers (from a list made by the Library of the House of Commons)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Devolve taxation on income tax, do not devolve income tax on savings and distributions. The structure of the income tax, including the bands, allowances and thresholds should not be devolved. 2. Devolve Stamp Duty Land Tax, Aggregates Levy, Landfill Tax and Air Passenger Duty. Allow Scotland to introduce new taxes that apply only in Scotland. Remain using the Barnett formula. 3. Strengthen intergovernmental arrangements step by step to deal with finance. Create Joint Ministerial Committee on Finance, more advise to Scottish Ministers, audit all relevant spending by the National Treasury Office. 4. Additional borrowing powers for Scottish Ministers, should be used to manage cash flow. Give additional power to borrow in order to increase capital investment in any one year. Put overall limit on this borrowing. 5. devolve powers on administration of Elections for Scottish Parliament. Devolve responsibility for appointing the Scottish member of the BBC trust to Scottish Ministers. 	Not applicable since this proposal is linked to the 2010 national party manifestos rather than to the referendum.

				<p>6. Devolve funding for animal health policy.</p> <p>7. Devolve regulation of airguns.</p> <p>8. Devolve responsibility for licensing and control of controlled substances and regulation-making powers relating to drink-driving limits to Scottish Ministers.</p> <p>9. Devolve determining national speed limit in Scotland.</p> <p>10. Devolve nature conservation to Scottish Parliament.</p> <p>11. Devolve The Deprived Areas Fund to Scottish Parliament, explore devolving discretionary elements of the fund.</p>	
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Issues:

- Barnett Allocation/Formula
- NHS/Health/safety
- Constitution
- Social services/Provisions
- Taxes/Borrowing/Revenues
- Transport
- Jobs/Employment/Equality
- Elections
- Local Government
- National
- Other

Appendix 4: Lexis Nexis power Search for Reconstruction and Issues

Articles found through Lexis Nexis search: Power Search

For Reconstruction and overview newspaper articles referendum

Search Type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every day from 30 May till 19 September separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - Scotsman and Scotland on Sunday (=reconstruction)

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow) (=overview)

By Name - the Independent and Independent on Sunday (London) (=overview)

By Name - Daily Telegraph and Sunday Telegraph (=overview)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Terms

Term(s) - Referendum

For overview issue Jobs/Business/Economy:

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - Jobs

OR

Subject - Business

OR

Subject - Economy

For issue Currency

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - Currency

For issue Oil/Gas Revenues

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - Oil

OR

Subject - Gas

AND

Subject - Revenues

For issue NHS/Health

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - NHS

OR

Subject - Health

For issue EU

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - EU

For issue NATO/Defense

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - NATO

OR

Subject - Defense

For issue Pensions

Search type: Terms and Connectors

Specify Date: Date is - every week from 30 May - 5 June separately

Select Source: By type - Newspapers

By Name - the Herald (Glasgow)

By Name - the Independent (London)

Add Selection Search:

Section - Subject

Subject - Referendum

AND

Subject - Pensions

Appendix 5: Analysis of Party Manifestos

This appendix provides the coding and analysis of the selected party manifestos. The 2010 national general election manifestos of the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and SNP. The 2011 Scottish election manifestos of the Scottish Conservatives, Scottish Labour, the Scottish Liberal Democrats and SNP.

Conservatives General Elections 2010 Party Manifesto

Word Count Devolution/devolve/devolving: 11 times in 4 sections

- *What do the national party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

The Conservatives' party manifesto includes a chapter "Strengthen the Union". They start with the opening statement that they support devolution and aim to make it work for all countries. The next mention of devolution refers to Scottish referendum, they claim that the devolution settlement made by Labour with Scotland has "caused separatism to gather momentum in Scotland" (Conservatives 2010). Hence they claim that the devolution settlement of 1997 has led to the resurgence of Scottish Nationalism. The manifesto also states it wants to keep the union together, and that they will follow the recommendations of the Calman Commission.

Regarding the relationship between Westminster and Holyrood and devolution, they state that the Prime minister and other Ministers will travel to Edinburgh on a regular basis for questioning, and they aim to make Scottish Parliament more responsible for raising their own money. There is no mention of further devolution or powers for Scotland.

Devolving powers is also mentioned in the context of devolving powers to London, from the 'politicians to the people' and on health budgets.

-*Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)*

The Conservatives support devolution. It is slightly difficult to identify cultural or economic reasons for this. However considering the fact that the Conservatives are negative about what devolution has brought in their eyes, a resurgence in nationalism, their reasons are not cultural. Furthermore, they are focused on extending devolution in an economic way, with tax raising powers for Scotland, which is why I identify their reason as economic.

Word Count Referendum: 8 times in 2 sections

- *What do the national party manifestos say about Scottish referendum in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

The Scottish referendum is not referred to in the party manifesto, which makes sense considering the referendum was decided upon after the 2011 Scottish elections.

Word Count Scotland: 5 times in 3 sections

- *What do the national party manifestos say about Scotland in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Scotland is mentioned in the economic section, on railway improvements, and separatism (which is discussed above).

Labour General Election Manifesto 2010

Word count Devolution: 9 times in 5 sections

- *What do the national party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Labour is positive about devolution saying it has strengthened the UK and provided a fairer partnership. They are proud of the legacy of devolution they have left behind and mention that more radical reforms are needed in order to renew the democratic public life. Labour further intends to implement the recommendations made by the Calman Commission, which include more tax powers to Scottish Parliament. Other mentions of devolution refer to Northern Ireland, the school system and energy.

Devolution is also mentioned in a different context, devolving national powers to cities and local councils, this gets more attention in this manifesto than devolving further powers to Scotland.

-*Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)*

Labour refers to devolution as providing a fairer partnership between the countries in the UK, which means an important reason for their support for devolution can be identified as cultural. However, Labour also mentions concrete new powers for Scotland, tax powers, that are economical. Therefore Labour here is identified as having both economical and cultural reasons for devolution.

Word count Referendum: 5 times in 2 sections

- *What do the national party manifestos say about Scottish referendum in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

There is no reference to the Scottish Referendum, once again because the manifesto was written in 2010 and there was no decision to hold a referendum made until 2011. Although Labour was in government the last four years and have blocked a Scottish referendum on more powers or independence, they do not mention this in their manifesto.

Word count Scotland: 1 time in 1 section

- *What do the national party manifestos say about Scotland in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Scotland is only mentioned in reference to railway and infrastructure.

Liberal Democrats general election manifesto 2010

Word count devolution/devolve/devolving: 3 times in 1 section

- *What do the national party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Devolution is mentioned at the end of the manifesto in the context of the Liberal Democrats acknowledging the fact that devolution has created different policies across the UK's nations, which means the Liberal Democrats have different manifestos in Wales and Scotland. The manifesto also states it wants to devolve powers to all nations (such as Scotland), communities and neighborhoods in Britain. They also mention tensions between Labour and the SNP between 2007 and 2010 which have caused an undermining of the devolution settlement and oil and gas revenues spreading. The Liberal Democrats aim to give more revenues back to Scotland. Devolution was not mentioned much in the manifesto itself, even though the Liberal Democrats support a federal Britain. This is why the search continued with another term; decentralization.

Word count decentralization: 2 times in 1 section

The section on a federal Britain mentions decentralization, which is essentially the same as Devolution. The Liberal Democrats are also committed to implement the recommendations made by the Calman commission. They are the only party so far to commit to giving significant new powers to Scottish Parliament. The Liberal Democrats are also committing themselves to restoring revenue to Scotland from the Registers of Scotland reserves, and give back several Scottish payments on Fossil Fuel, and give Scottish Governments more control over revenues that are still to come.

-Do they oppose or support devolution/decentralization? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)

The Liberal Democrats are committed to creating a federal Britain, with more powers for local authorities, because they believe this will lead to a better state. In this way, there are clear cultural reasons for the Liberal Democrats to support devolution, because it has to lead to the federal state they believe in. Furthermore, there are also clear economic reasons, with the Liberal Democrats also actively supporting economic powers such as tax powers being devolved to lower levels.

Word count referendum: 3 times in 2 sections

- What do the national party manifestos say about Scottish referendum in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

Once again, no reference to the Scottish referendum.

Word count Scotland: 9 times in 3 sections

- What do the national party manifestos say about Scotland in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

Scotland is mentioned in the section a federal Britain, which has been discussed above. Scotland is also mentioned in the section on jobs, with the Liberal Democrats aiming to create more jobs in Scotland, and when discussing a new model on access to the countryside.

SNP General Election Manifesto 2010

Word Count Devolution/devolve/devolving: 4 times in 2 sections

- What do the national party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

The SNP support devolution, any additional responsibilities for Scottish Parliament would be supported, though here they already recognize that Scotland should be independent to achieve more in their economy and on public finances. So, the SNP supports further devolution to Scottish Parliament.

*-Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural?
(Toubeau & Wagner)*

The SNP support devolution, though only as a second best option, they really prefer independence for Scotland, rather than more devolution. Their reasons for supporting devolution are economic, the SNP believes Scotland would be better equipped in dealing with economic pressures and have more hold over their public finances. At the same time there is a clear cultural component, though with the SNP the cultural dimension is tied much more to independence, rather than devolution.

Word Count Referendum: 9 times in 2 sections

- What do the national party manifestos say about Scottish referendum in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

The SNP mentions that Labour has blocked a Scottish referendum on independence or further powers during their latest four years in government. The SNP here wants a referendum on extending responsibilities of Scottish Parliament. This referendum should allow both for further devolution and for independence as well.

Word Count Scotland: 160 times in 6 (all) sections

- What do the national party manifestos say about Scotland in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

Considering the fact that the SNP is a Scottish Regional party taking part in the general election, the amount of times the manifesto refers to Scotland clearly provides a somewhat distorted vision.

Scottish Conservatives Scottish elections manifesto 2011

Word count Devolution/devolve/devolving: 3 times in 3 sections

- What do the regional party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)

This manifesto only refers to devolution, to express their view that since devolution, the rate of business start-ups has flat lined. They also aim at protecting the devolved international aid budget, but do not talk about expanding it. Finally they talk about setting absence targets for devolved public bodies below Scottish Parliament. It also does not refer to the Calman commission, unlike the 2010 national manifesto.

*-Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural?
(Toubeau & Wagner)*

It does not become clear from the party manifesto whether the Scottish Conservatives oppose or support (further) devolution. The only clear support for devolution that can be derived is the Conservatives' aim to protect the devolved international aid budget. It would be somewhat strange for these regional parties to be opposed to devolution, considering the fact that devolution has given them existence.

Word count referendum: Referendum is not mentioned in this party manifesto.

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about the Scottish Referendum? (Libbrecht et al.)*

A Scottish referendum on devolution or independence is not referred to in this party manifesto.

Word Count Scotland Bill: The Scotland Bill is not referred to in this manifesto.

Scottish Labour Scottish elections manifesto 2011

Word count Devolution/devolve/devolving: Devolution 3 times in 2 sections

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Scottish Labour is in favor of further devolution in several areas and are supporters of the idea of greater accountability in Scottish Parliament for its spending priorities, as its national equivalent is as well. They are in favor of devolving more powers in areas such as capital borrowing powers, new tax powers and setting the drink-drive and speed limit in Scotland.

-*Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)*

It is somewhat difficult to get behind the reasons of Scottish Labour to support these new powers. Though it is likely that these were the recommendations made in the Calman report, and are therefore the powers that were devolved in the Scotland Act. This would mean that Scottish Labour would support this devolution because of national Labour's stance, and national Labour has both economic and cultural reasons.

Word count referendum: Referendum is not referred to in this manifesto

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about the Scottish Referendum? (Libbrecht et al.)*

This manifesto does not refer to a Scottish referendum.

Word Count Scotland Bill: 1 time in 1 section

The Scotland Bill on new powers for Scotland which would turn into the Scotland Act 2012 is mentioned once, when Scottish Labour support the additional accountability it will receive on the spending priorities of Scottish Parliament.

Scottish Liberal Democrats Scottish elections manifesto 2011

Word count Devolution: 3 times in 3 sections.

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

Devolution in the context of national to Scotland is not mentioned in this party manifesto, nor is decentralization or the Calman commission. It is only mentioned in the context of Scottish Parliament devolving powers to lower bodies. The manifesto does recognize the new powers to be received from the Scotland Bill, which would turn into the Scotland Act 2012, and sets out what it would like to do with these extra powers.

-*Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)*

Devolution in the context of national to Scotland is not mentioned in this party manifesto, therefore from this manifesto cannot be concluded how their reasons for opposing or supporting devolution can be identified. In this case however, it is likely that the reasons for the Scottish Liberal Democrats would be the same as those of the national Liberal Democrats.

Word count referendum: Referendum is not referred to in this manifesto

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about the Scottish Referendum? (Libbrecht et al.)*

This manifesto does not refer to a (Scottish) referendum.

Word Count Scotland Bill: 4 times in 2 sections

The party manifesto refers to the Scotland Bill when aiming to use its new borrowing powers on certain policies. Furthermore, they aim to use the new powers the Scotland Bill will provide, to reform council tax.

SNP Scottish elections manifesto 2011

Word count Devolution: 15 times in 8 sections

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about devolution in general? (Libbrecht et al.)*

The SNP extensively refers to devolution in its manifesto, specifically in the sense that they aim at getting more powers devolved to Scotland. The SNP aims at getting the power to make its own rules on Housing Benefit as well at devolution of budgets and legislative responsibilities. They are also in favor of receiving responsibility for all firearms legislation, responsibility for Corporation Tax and more power on energy. The manifesto also refers to devolution in the context of Scottish Parliament devolving powers to lower bodies.

-*Do they oppose or support devolution? Are their reasons identified as economic or cultural? (Toubeau & Wagner)*

The SNP clearly supports (further) devolution, though they would prefer independence, which is stated clearly in the manifesto as well. Their reasons for supporting devolution are both economic, they state Scotland would do better economically with additional powers and responsibility, as well as cultural. The manifest looks back at the opening of the Scottish Parliament in

1999: "it fell to an emotional Winnie Ewing – more than three decades after her first electoral success – to open the Parliament with the words, the Scottish Parliament, adjourned on the 25th day of March of 1707, is hereby reconvened" (SNP 2011). They also describe devolution as a way to stand up for Scotland's interests, which is another aspect of devolution that is more cultural than economical.

Word count referendum: 7 times in 4 sections

- *What do the regional party manifestos say about the Scottish Referendum? (Libbrecht et al.)*

In this manifesto the SNP promises to put forward a referendum bill if they win the elections, which should lead to an independence referendum. The SNP believes independence will allow Scotland to prosper, and they believe everyone in Scotland will benefit from independence.

Word count Conservatives/Tories/Tory: 11 times in 7 sections

(Swenden and McEwen)

The Conservative party is mentioned a number of times in this manifesto, particularly in the section on independence. All references to the party('s policy) are negative, and all references are on the national branch of the Conservatives, rather than its Scottish counterpart.

Differences between National and Scottish Party Manifestos

- *Analyzing differences between national and Scottish party manifestos on topics of devolution and referendum; do Scottish manifestos refer to national standpoints?*

National versus Scottish (Libbrecht et al.)

What has become most clear from the national 2010 party manifestos and the 2011 party manifestos is that none of the parties have contradicted themselves on the topic of devolution. All national parties used the Calman Commission report on devolution, and stated it would follow its recommendations. (An analysis of these recommendations has also been done). What followed from this was the Scotland Bill, which would become the Scotland Act in 2012, that gave additional powers to Scottish Parliament. Interestingly the Scottish Conservatives did not refer to either the Calman Commission, or the new powers that would be gained from the Scotland Bill/Act. Scottish Labour only stated to support the extra accountability for spending Scottish Parliament would receive. Furthermore, none of the Scottish counterparts of its union parties aim at further devolution beyond the Scotland Bill, though they do support devolution in general. So the 2011 party manifestos do not explain the vow. There has not probably been bottom-up pressure for more devolution from the Scottish counterparts of the unionist parties that became successful during the referendum period.

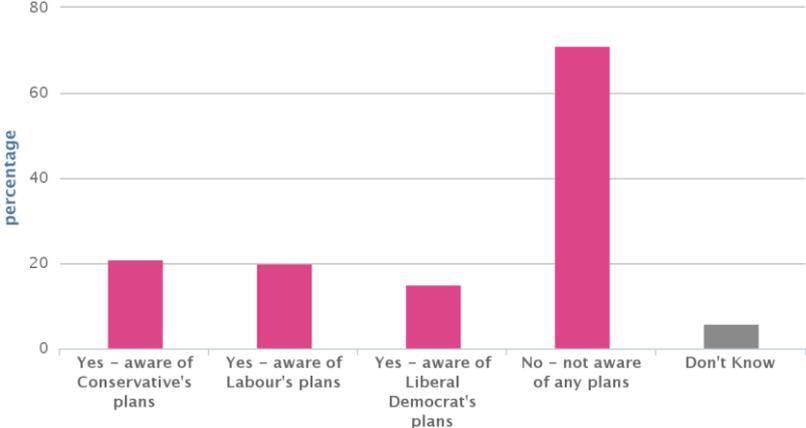
Conservatives/Liberal Democrats versus SNP (Swenden and McEwen)

For Swenden and McEwen though, the main differences that need to be analyzed are those between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats 2010 manifesto and the SNP's 2011 manifesto. The

manifesto refers quite a few times to the Conservatives, more often than to the referendum, though not as often as they refer to devolution. Also, the references towards the Conservatives, are of a negative tone and are aimed at the national, rather than the Scottish branch. This could indicate a clear shadow of hierarchy and party incongruence with the regional party (the SNP) clearly distancing itself from the national party (the Conservatives).

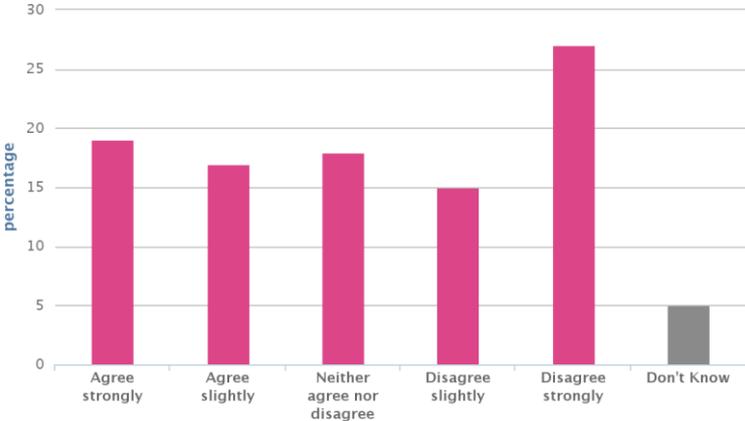
Appendix 6 Polls from Reconstruction

Are you aware of what each of the three main UK parties has offered in terms of devolving more powers to Scotland in the event of a No vote? (multiple answers possible)



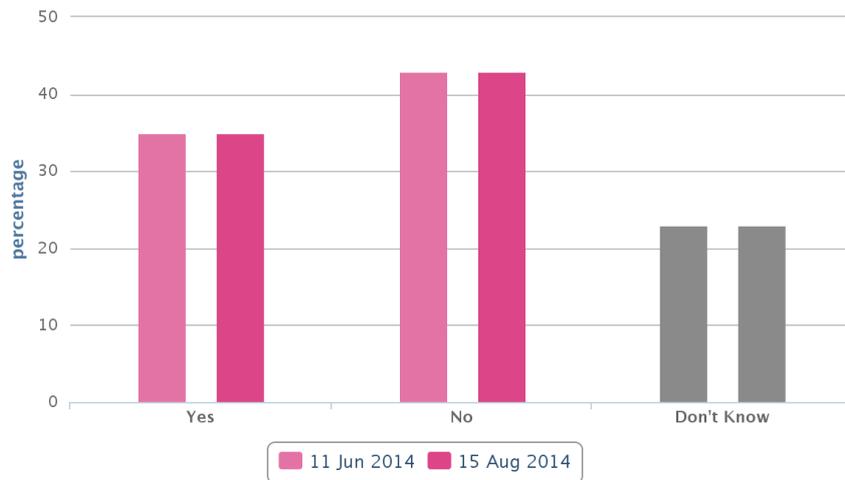
6.1: Poll conducted by TNS-BMRB on 23 June. Source: What Scotland Thinks, 2015

Do you agree or disagree that you have enough information about what will happen next if there is a No vote?



6.2 Poll conducted by TNS-BMRB on 7 August, 1003 respondents. Source: What Scotland Thinks, 2015

If there is a No vote, do you think that the Westminster parties could be trusted to deliver any extra powers for the Scottish Parliament?

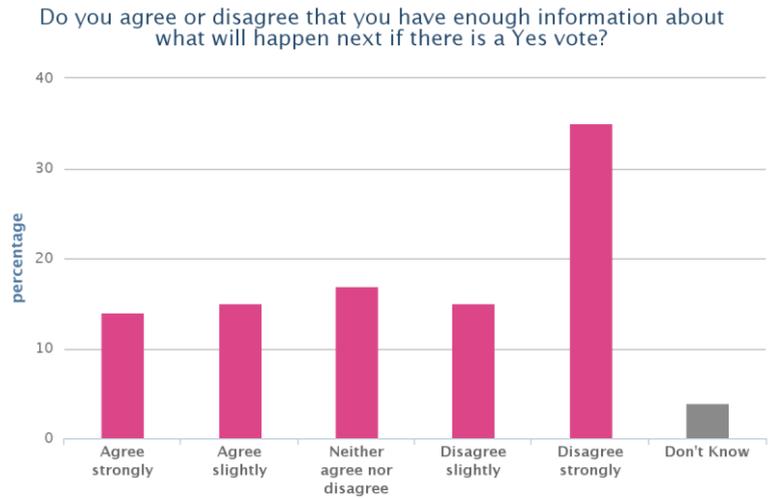


6.3 Both polls were conducted by Panelbase, with 1060 and 1026 respondents respectively. Source: What Scotland Thinks, 2015

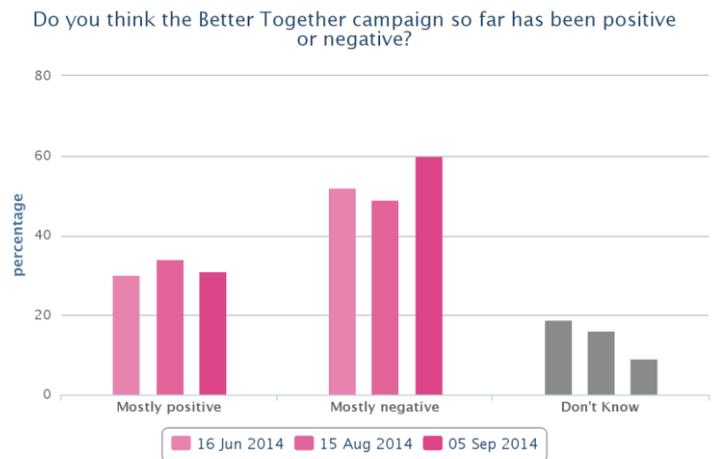
How clear or unclear are you about what devolved powers would be given to Scotland if it remained in the UK?



6.4: Poll conducted by YouGov for SkyNews on 15 and 16 September right between the appearance of the vow in the Daily Record, 2397 respondents. Source: What Scotland Thinks, 2015.



6.5: Poll conducted by TNS-BMRB on 7 August, 1003 respondents. Source: What Scotland Thinks, 2015



6.6: Poll conducted by YouGov, approximately 1050 respondents on all three occasions. Source: What Scotland Thinks 2015

Appendix 7 Applying Spina's Government Determinants

Applying Spina's (2013) Stable, Powerful governments and rise of regionalist parties to Scotland

- Spina's Government determinants for devolution:

Stable and powerful government: The number of threats from alternative majority governments that can be formed by different parties in the legislature. The percentage of the parties' legislative seats in government, which can influence the policy agenda. Look at the allocation of seats in the House of Commons for Governments between 1997 and 2010 to determine whether 2010 government can be seen as stable compared with previous governments:

1997: total number of seats is 659, 330 seats for majority. Government: Labour, with 418 seats. Conservatives 165. Liberal Democrats 46. Other 30. Alternative majority governments possible: none. → *In the Banzhaf index automatically receives score of 1 because there is a single party majority government, = stable and powerful*

2001: total number of seats is 659, 330 seats for majority. Government: Labour with 413 seats. Conservatives 166. Liberal Democrats 52. Other 28. Alternative majority governments possible: none → *In the Banzhaf index automatically receives score of 1 because there is a single party majority government, = stable and powerful*

2005: total number of seats is 646, 324 seats for majority. Government: Labour with 355 seats. Conservatives 198. Liberal Democrats 62. Other 31. Alternative majority governments possible: none → *In the Banzhaf index automatically receives score of 1 because there is a single party majority government, = stable and powerful*

2010: total number of seats is 650, 326 seats for majority. Government: Conservatives and Liberal Democrats coalition combined 363 seats. Conservatives 306. Labour 258. Liberal Democrats 57. Other 29 (Scottish National Party 6 - Green Party 1 - Sinn Fein 5 - Democratic Unionist party 8 - Plaid Cymru - 3). Alternative majority governments possible: 1. Labour-Liberal Democrats-Democratic Unionist Party- Plaid Cymru 2. Labour-Liberal Democrats-Scottish National Party-Sinn Fein. 3. Labour-Liberal Democrats-Scottish National Party-Democratic Unionist Party 4. Conservatives with a combination of other parties. → Since this is the only non-single party majority government, the Banzhaf power index calculator was used here. The definite score cannot be calculated, however it is surely below 1, which means that the most unstable and least powerful government has moved towards further decentralization. Furthermore, this thesis measures in a qualitative way, whereas Spina (2013) is concerned with quantitative measures.

So, the Government elected in 2010, who decided upon further decentralizing power after the Scottish Independence referendum would, according to Spina, be the least stable government of the

last 4 governments. So, the 1997 devolution would fit into Spina's view, whereas the 2014 decision to devolve would not. 2010 is the only period where alternative majority governments are possible, how likely they are however, certainly considering British political culture, is another matter.

Rise of Regionalist parties: As with the above variable, Spina tests his model in a quantitative manner, since this thesis is focused on qualitative measuring, this thesis will not measure the effect of regionalist parties in the same way. It is however not expected that this will alter Spina's (2013) theorized effect:

Number of seats for the Scottish national party in the House of Commons, Westminster

1997: 6 seats

2001: 5 seats

2005: 4 seats

2010: 6 seats

Number of seats for the Scottish national party in Scottish Parliament

1999: 35 seats

2003: 27 seats

2007: 47 seats

2011: 69 seats (absolute majority of seats in Scottish Parliament)

Spina (2013) expects that higher percentages of regionalist parties in the national legislature would increase the likelihood of governments enacting political decentralization. What becomes clear from the number of seats the SNP obtained in the House of Commons, in 2010 they were for the first time back to their 1997 number, after having lost a seat per election in 2001 and 2005. Furthermore, the SNP had spectacularly grown since 2003, being part of the Scottish executive in 2007 and holding a majority in Scottish Parliament in 2011, which is extraordinary, considering the way this parliament is elected, a mix of first-past-the-post and representative voting.

So, two independent variables that Spina (2013) claims lead to political decentralization; stable and powerful government and the rise of ethnoregionalist parties, are both not clearly present in the case of the 2014 independence referendum which led to the promise of devolution. There was no spectacular rise of the SNP in the national legislature, though they were back at their 1997 level, when devolution also took place. Regarding stable and powerful government, according to Spina's (2013) measurements, the 2010 Coalition government was the weakest in at least 13 years, since the 1997 devolution had taken place. Hence, Spina's determinants do not pose an explanation for the devolution promises during the 2014 independence referendum.

Appendix 8 Overview newspaper coverage per each issue

Newspaper overview national/Scottish on issues

Hits Subject on Referendum +Economy OR Business OR Jobs

Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	6	1
2: 6 June - 12 June	4	0
3: 13 - 19 June	2	0
4: 20-26 June	2	3
5: 27 June - 3 July	4	1
6: 4 - 10 July	7	2
7: 11 - 17 July	3	2
8: 18 - 24 July	1	1
9: 25 - 31 July	1	1
10: 1 - 7 August	0	3
11: 8 - 14 August	3	0
12: 15 - 21 August	3	1
13: 22 - 28 August	3	3
14: 29 August - 4 September	7	1
15: 5 - 11 September	3	6
16: 12 - 18 September	6	16
Total	55	41

Hits Subject Referendum +Currency

Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	1	1
2: 6 June - 12 June	3	0
3: 13 - 19 June	2	0

4: 20-26 June	1	0
5: 27 June - 3 July	1	0
6: 4 - 10 July	2	1
7: 11 - 17 July	0	2
8: 18 - 24 July	0	0
9: 25 - 31 July	1	0
10: 1 - 7 August	7	2
11: 8 - 14 August	9	1
12: 15 - 21 August	10	2
13: 22 - 28 August	10	2
14: 29 August - 4 September	9	1
15: 5 - 11 September	7	9
16: 12 - 18 September	14	4
Total	77	25

Hits Referendum + EU

Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	0	1
2: 6 June - 12 June	0	0
3: 13 - 19 June	0	0
4: 20-26 June	0	1
5: 27 June - 3 July	0	0
6: 4 - 10 July	1	0
7: 11 - 17 July	0	0
8: 18 - 24 July	0	0
9: 25 - 31 July	0	0

10: 1 - 7 August	0	0
11: 8 - 14 August	0	0
12: 15 - 21 August	0	0
13: 22 - 28 August	0	0
14: 29 August - 4 September	0	0
15: 5 - 11 September	0	0
16: 12 - 18 September	0	0
	1	2

→ Especially the Herald is a weird result! there were definitely more hits in the Scotsman, which I can see from the reconstruction, but I can't get into that through LexisNexis anymore.

Hits Subject Referendum + NATO OR Defence OR Defense

Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	2	1
2: 6 June - 12 June	1	0
3: 13 - 19 June	1	0
4: 20-26 June	3	0
5: 27 June - 3 July	1	0
6: 4 - 10 July	2	1
7: 11 - 17 July	4	2
8: 18 - 24 July	1	0
9: 25 - 31 July	0	0
10: 1 - 7 August	0	2
11: 8 - 14 August	1	1
12: 15 - 21 August	2	2
13: 22 - 28 August	1	2
14: 29 August - 4 September	2	1

15: 5 - 11 September	0	9
16: 12 - 18 September	2	4
Total	23	8

Hits on Subject Referendum + Oil OR Gas OR revenues

Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	2	0
2: 6 June - 12 June	1	0
3: 13 - 19 June	1	1
4: 20-26 June	1	1
5: 27 June - 3 July	3	0
6: 4 - 10 July	3	0
7: 11 - 17 July	1	1
8: 18 - 24 July	0	1
9: 25 - 31 July	1	0
10: 1 - 7 August	2	0
11: 8 - 14 August	2	0
12: 15 - 21 August	4	0
13: 22 - 28 August	5	0
14: 29 August - 4 September	3	0
15: 5 - 11 September	3	1
16: 12 - 18 September	5	7
Total	37	12

Hits on Subject Referendum + National Health Service OR Health

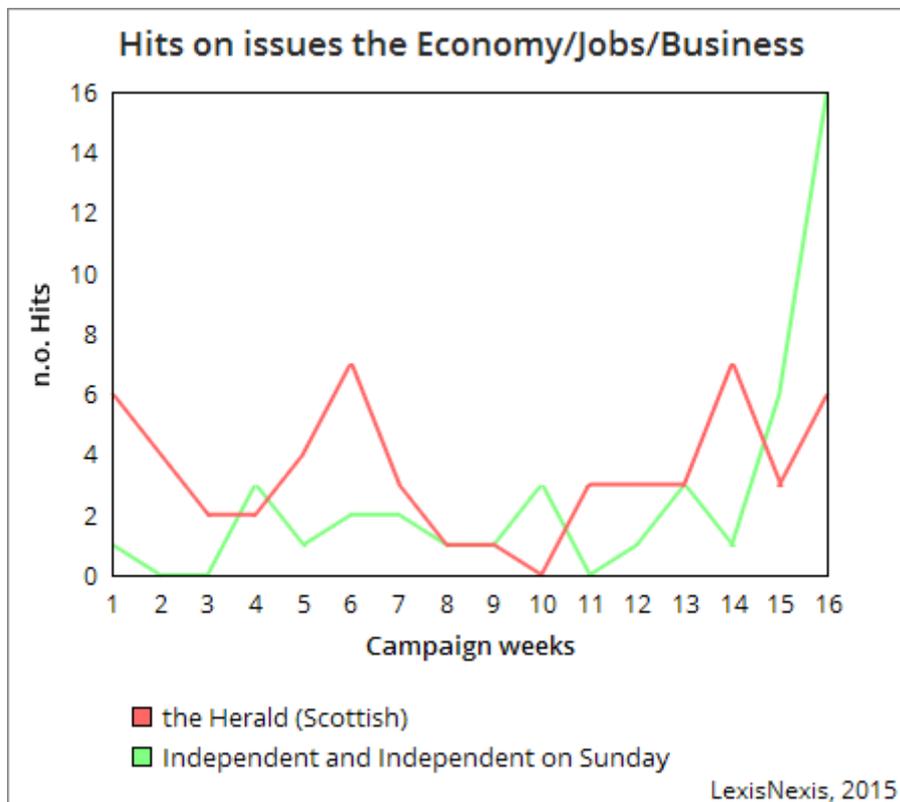
Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	2	0
2: 6 June - 12 June	2	0

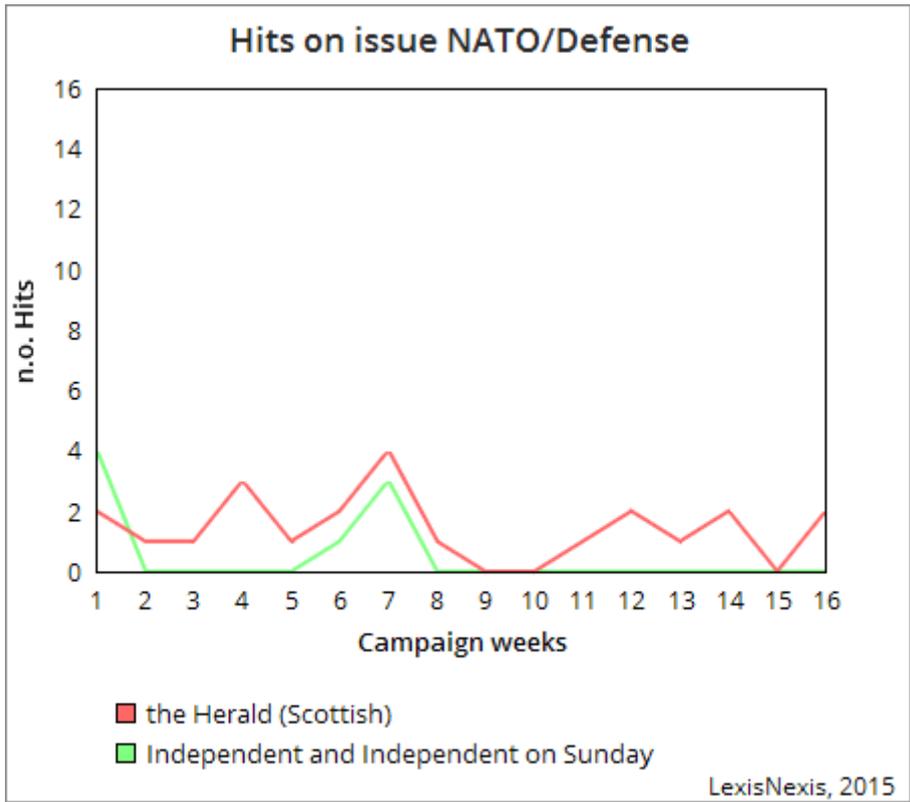
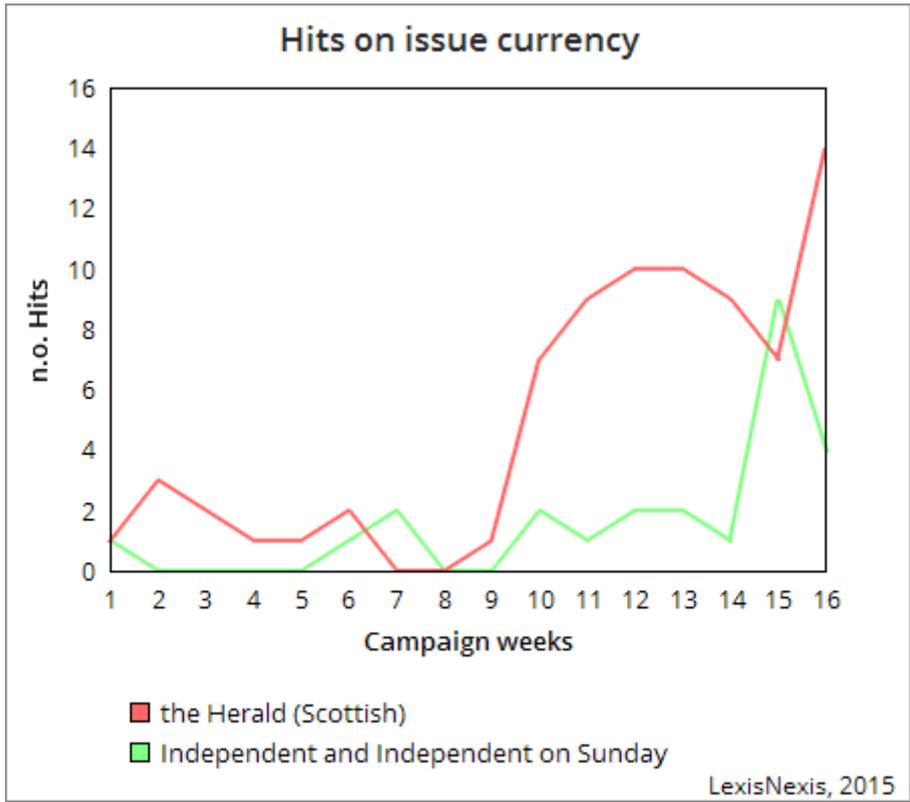
3: 13 - 19 June	1	0
4: 20-26 June	2	0
5: 27 June - 3 July	0	0
6: 4 - 10 July	0	0
7: 11 - 17 July	0	2
8: 18 - 24 July	2	0
9: 25 - 31 July	1	0
10: 1 - 7 August	0	0
11: 8 - 14 August	2	0
12: 15 - 21 August	12	1
13: 22 - 28 August	6	0
14: 29 August - 4 September	1	0
15: 5 - 11 September	3	1
16: 12 - 18 September	6	2
Total	40	6

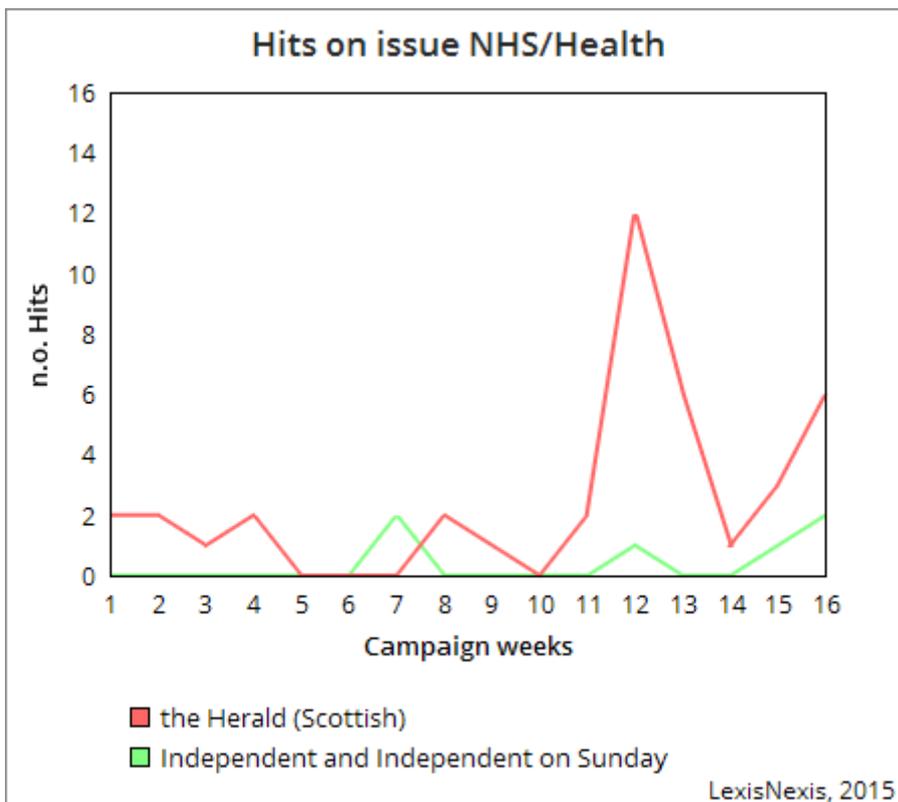
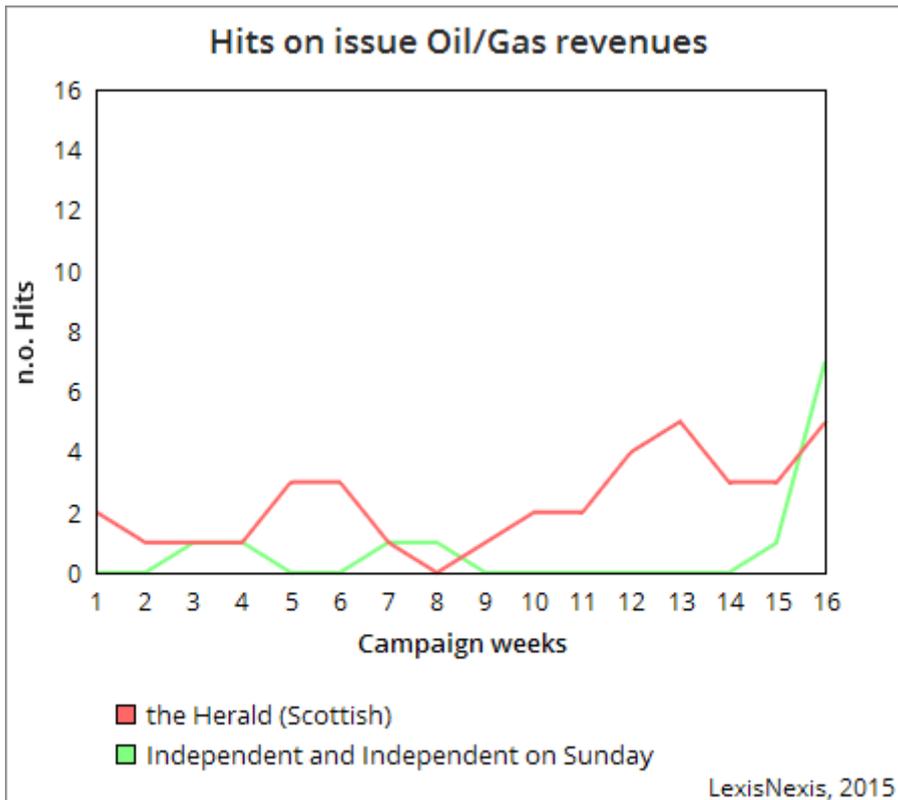
Hits on Subject Referendum + Pensions

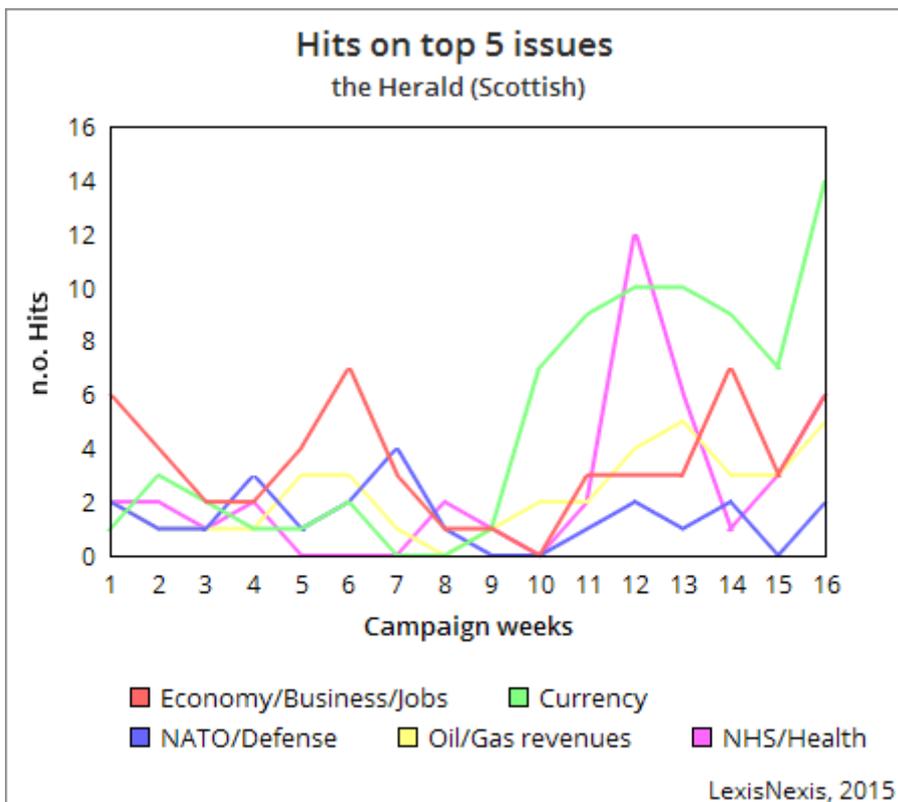
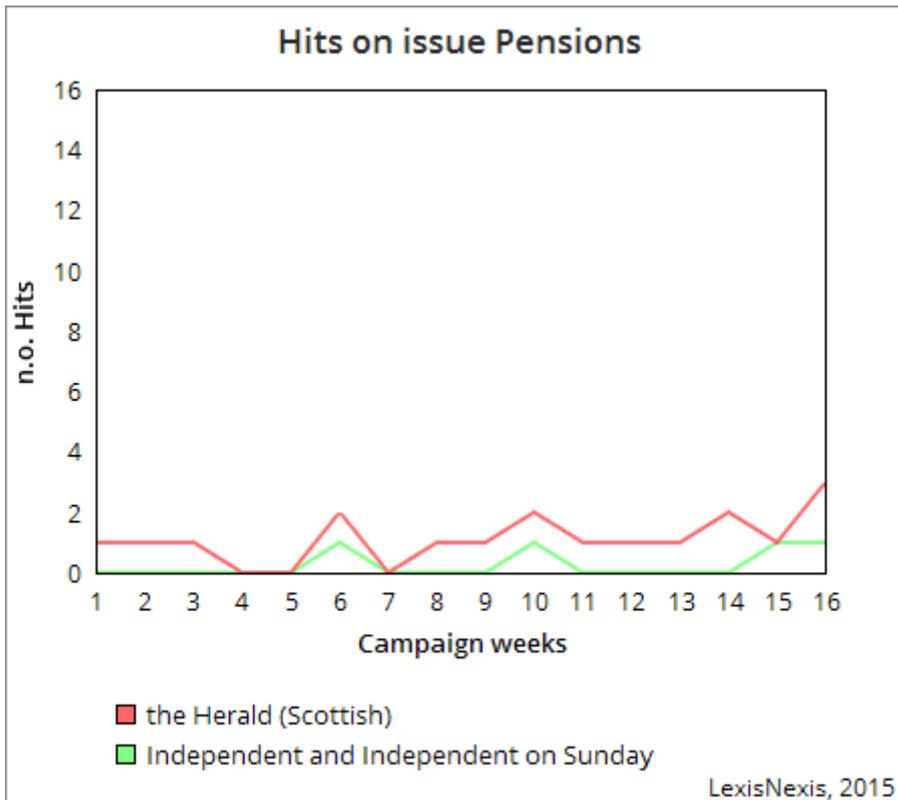
Campaign Weeks	n.o. hits the Herald	n.o. hits Independent
1: 30 May - 5 June	1	0
2: 6 June - 12 June	1	0
3: 13 - 19 June	1	0
4: 20-26 June	0	0
5: 27 June - 3 July	0	0
6: 4 - 10 July	2	1
7: 11 - 17 July	0	0
8: 18 - 24 July	1	0

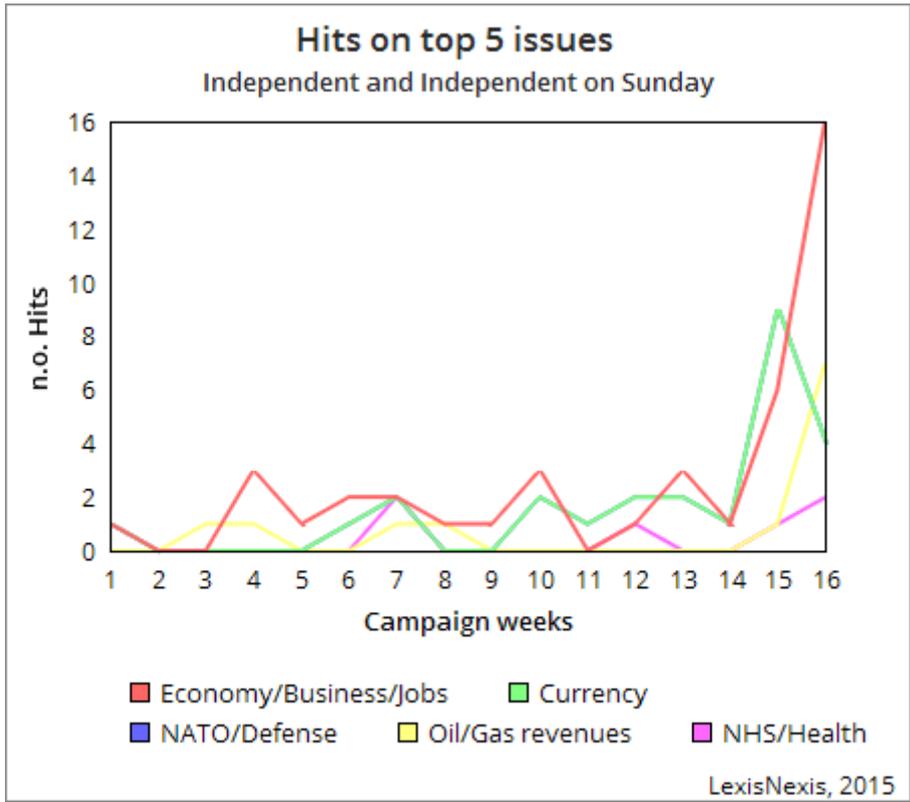
9: 25 - 31 July	1	0
10: 1 - 7 August	2	1
11: 8 - 14 August	1	0
12: 15 - 21 August	1	0
13: 22 - 28 August	1	0
14: 29 August - 4 September	2	0
15: 5 - 11 September	1	1
16: 12 - 18 September	3	1
Total	18	4







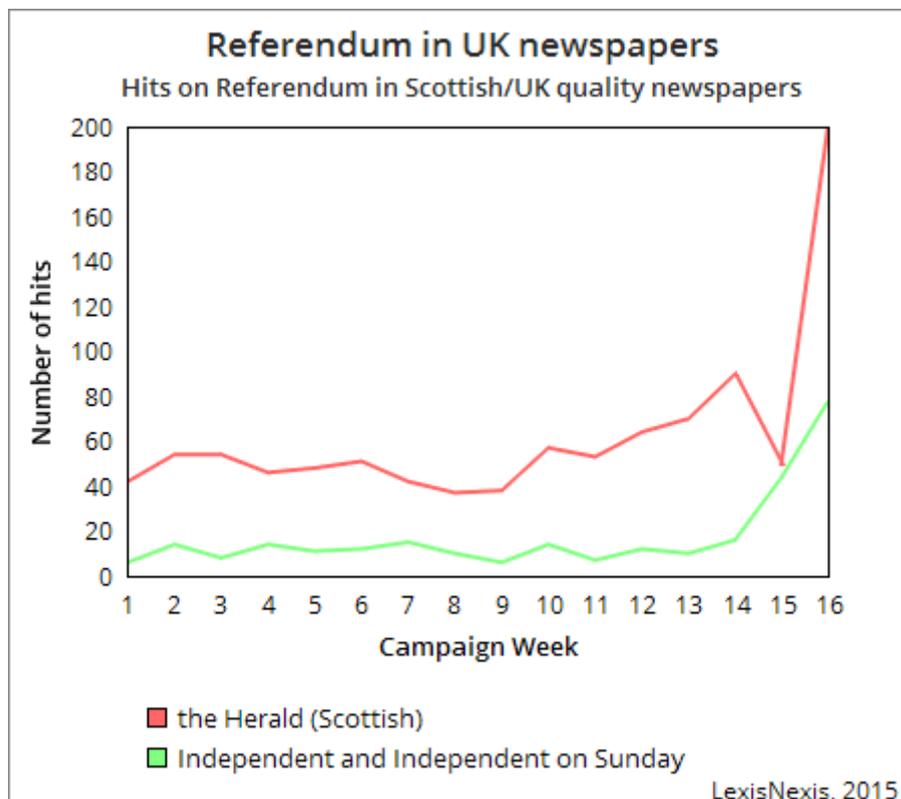


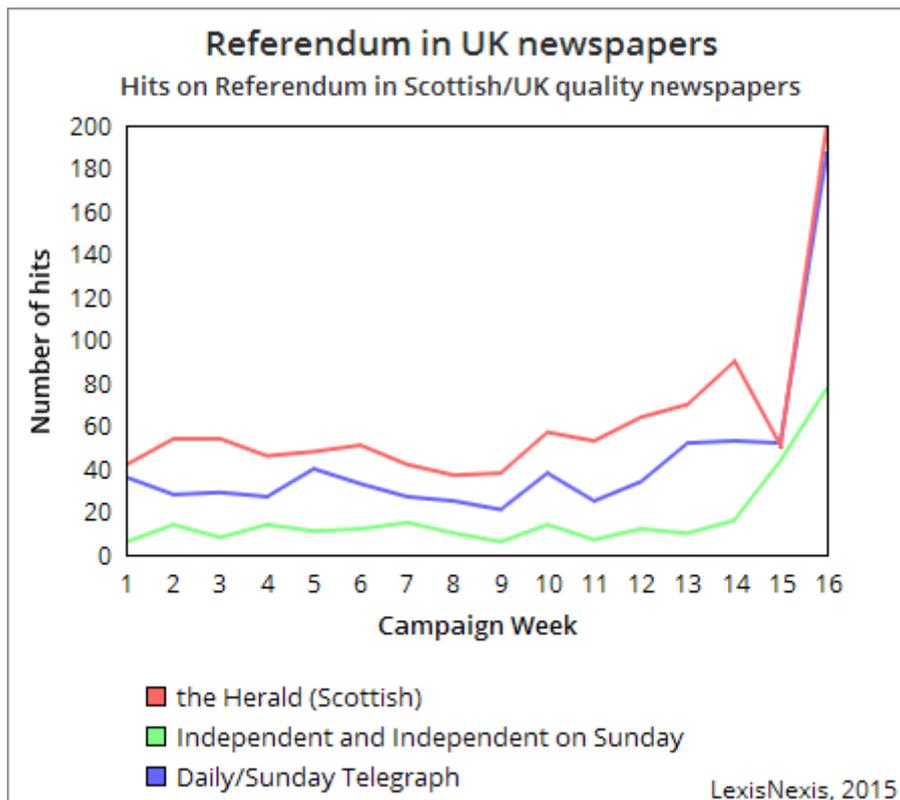


Appendix 9 Overview newspaper coverage Referendum

Week of campaign (friday-thursday)	the Scotsman hits on subject Referendum	the Herald hits on subject Referendum	Independent and Independent on Sunday hits on independence referendum	the Daily/Sunday Telegraph hits on subject referendum
1: 30 May - 5 June		42	6	36
2: 6 June - 12 June		54	14	28
3: 13 - 19 June		54	8	29
4: 20-26 June		46	14	27
5: 27 June - 3 July		48	11	40
6: 4 - 10 July		51	12	33
7: 11 - 17 July		42	15	27
8: 18 - 24 July		37	10	25
9: 25 - 31 July		38	6	21
10: 1 - 7 August		57	14	38
11: 8 - 14 August		53	7	25
12: 15 - 21 August		64	12	34
13: 22 - 28 August		70	10	52
14: 29 August - 4 September		90	16	53

15: 5 - 11 September		50	44	52
16: 12 - 18 September		200	78	188





What is clear from both graphs, is that the referendum is always more present in Scottish newspapers than in national newspapers. There was however, a very significant difference between coverage of the referendum in the Herald and Independent, which is why the Daily Telegraph was added as an additional national newspaper. There is also a difference in coverage of the referendum between Independent and the Daily Telegraph, which cannot be accounted for. However, even with the addition of the Daily Telegraph, Scottish coverage in numbers is still higher than both national newspapers. This indicates that for the most part of the campaign, the referendum was considered to be a Scottish issue, rather than a national one. However, from week 15, there is a rise in hits on the referendum for all three newspapers. Week 15 of the campaign lasted from 5-11 September, and as mentioned in the reconstruction, the shock poll was first reported on in this week. So the rise in coverage could be natural, since the referendum date came closer (this is especially the case for the Herald), but the extensive rise for all three newspapers, also indicates that the poll may have had some additional influence, making the referendum a national issue, because independence was now a realistic possible outcome of the referendum.